

CINEMA

Papers \$5



SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN AUSTRALIAN FILM: AN OVERVIEW

ROMPER STOMPER / THE NOSTRADAMUS KID / GREENKEEPING / EIGHT BALL

PLUS KATHRIN BIGELOW / TOKYO FILM FESTIVAL / HDTV AND SUPER 16

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Sydney 8 West Street North Sydney NSW 2060 Telephone 02 925 7333

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BRIAN KINNAR AND ALAN BARKER (RIGHT) ARE OPPOSED TO THIS MISUSE OF TRUTH

Films (Hazel Rose) and Meridian Films (Tim White and Bruce McLaren) are permanently licensed these. In the film to be shot, the ACT's *Playback Theatre* will shoot in the studio.

With all this said, what's the reason Cramer refuses? Is he using the word correctly, or deliberately misusing it for one or other of fear? Does the reader have enough background to fully understand what he is saying? Certainly there are clues, what he says elsewhere.

Cramer in Australia should be, and to a certain extent is, an extension of propagandising. In publishing/publishing is one another. [...] My first sense is about the timing of this. A film maker who is constantly and making films about it. I've been around touring studies all my life. [...] I must have about where I come from.

Yet, but only a few lines on Cramer also says that the visual right of Aboriginality will be "transformed" between Peter Wei, Herman and Jacques Tati. Whether of these involves is noted for their representation of Australia in the past or elsewhere, all are laughing. Cramer is pulling the collective leg.

But in this context of its colonisation the title explanation for the use of the term "Aboriginality" is perhaps not, which is why two representatives were sent to Cramer. Who are the committee and you are referring to?" said. Do you see it as ironic that one of your biggest supporters, critically in Asian Media, whose writing is greatly influenced by someone?"

However, Cramer declined to answer. Though the film's producer, Garrye Rose, did his best. "David was being longer in the show - he is quite black at times." Indeed, but the question remains: Who is he being black about?

LETTER: 'BRAN NUE DAE'

(FROM BARKER)

As the executive producer of the film *Brân Nue Dae*, and as a person who has worked very closely with the *Brân Nue Dae* community, I must respond to the review of the film by Marcus Brown (*Cinema Papers* No. 45 November 1991) pp. 54-5.

Brân is a review goes beyond being a review of the film, including a criticism of Jimmy Choo's point of view and his message he is trying to put across both in the musical and in the film.

Brân has made the serious mistake of trying to impose his own views on Aboriginal people. He is guilty of telling Jimmy Choo to express more outrage and be concerned with oppression when Jimmy is trying to put across a completely different point of view.

Jimmy has gone beyond merely expressing outrage. He wants people to come together through better understanding. As Jimmy himself says in the film, when talking about his reasons for writing the song "Carnegie Hall", he wanted to do a song that dealt with land rights and other issues, it is a song that would not divide people.

Jimmy's message is that Aboriginal people have a strength and well-being that produces a great love and happy performance in their something wrong with Aboriginal people being happy. A major point that Brown seems to have missed is that *Brân Nue Dae* is showing what is in urban white Australia and looking and that Aboriginal people may well have something to teach us about how to live.

When white Australians make films about blacks they often and apparently more subtle Aboriginal people have found this form of racial stereotyping insulting. Your review is obviously unaware of that.

Brân Nue Dae is very much a collaborative

production between Tom Zubrycki and the *Brân Nue Dae* Aboriginal Corporation which owns the film. From the start the intention was to enter views in a completely new statement, the story of the show Jimmy Choo's experience, the struggle to get the play produced and the historical angles in the music itself. Black white relationships are portrayed as mixed and ambiguous, especially the role of the Church. What isn't conveyed is a film of racial stereotypes that Brân obviously desires, possibly out of a sense of white guilt.

Clearly one measure of the success of the film is how Aboriginal audiences have responded to it. Figures show that the distributor, Brân, has had a high number of requests for print rentals and orders for videotape rentals. Aboriginal community film throughout Australia. The film has inspired at least one community to start its own production at the show.

The quality of the sound of the live performance in the film, which Brân also criticises, is determined by the quality of the performance. There are limitations on what you can expect (disappointment and criticism pertinent to do in their live performance on stage). His failure to recognize these limitations would lead one to question his competence as a reviewer, especially in Aboriginal music.

Let Aboriginal people have their say. By all means criticize the results, but don't restrict the forms they are allowed to use to express themselves.

GARRY ROSE

Executive Producer *Brân Nue Dae*

BRIAN REPLY

My comments on the film stand.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH AUSTRALIAN FEATURE PRODUCTION?



After a few years of minimal feature film activity, suddenly the fax to CINEMA PAPERS' "Production Survey" is running hot with new entries.

Most of these features are low budget, funded by the Australian Film Commission and Film Victoria, or by the Australian Film Finance Corporation's Trust Film Fund. One feature has even gone into production with no government investment.

To give an overview of what's happening behind the cameras, CINEMA PAPERS will run (over this and the next issue) location reports and picture previews on every feature to go into production in 1991/92.



In 1988, Geoffrey Wright

wrote and directed his first short feature,

***Lover Boy*, the story of an improbable**

liaison between a 43-year-old woman

and a 16-year-old boy.

Lover Boy won awards for Best Short Film at the Melbourne and Sydney Film Festivals in 1989, and was hailed as an impressive first effort by critics. Wright, a graduate from the Melbourne Film and Television School, was praised for his sensitive treatment of a young boy's budding towards sexual maturity, and for his ability to render a stark and sometimes disturbingly accurate picture of urban, working-class Australia.

Since completing *Lover Boy*, Geoffrey Wright has done a lot of waiting to get his next project, *Romper Stomper*, off the ground. In 1991, the Australian Film Commission, together with Film Victoria, provided the \$1.6 million budget for *Romper Stomper*, a story Wright says he had been living with for more years than he can remember. It has been a long haul.

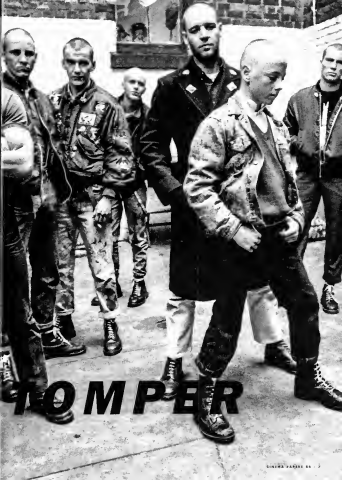
Wright's story is a familiar one to the independent filmmaker who was once married and hobbled by a reliance on government funding. However, in the case of *Romper Stomper*, the film's evolution was further complicated by the controversy which clung persistently to the project from the start. For in *Romper Stomper* Wright faces the issue squarely on a head of underbills. Neo-Nazi skinheads.



GEOFFREY WRIGHT'S **ROMPER S**

LOCATION REPORT BY EVA FRIEDMAN
PHOTOGRAPHS: PETER LEISS

ADRIAN WRIGHT (LOCATION DIRECTOR) WRIGHT
BOOTH, THE MURRAY-BLACK, JOHNSON, KROGER.



NO M P E R



Romper Stomper

Romper Stomper charts the escapades of a gang of skinheads who believe in white supremacy. The gang is led by Hands (Russell Crowe), a man seduced by his hatred of Asians. Together with Desec (Daniel Pollock), his withdrawn friend, the gang becomes involved in urban warfare with the Vietnamese in their neighborhood.

Into this marketplace of violence walks Gabe (Jacqueline McKenzie), an impetuous girl on the run from her junkie boyfriend. She becomes involved with Hands. However, as she sinks further and further into this tumultuous world, she is drawn to Hands's sulky friend, Desec. Amid the end-of-the-world tension, the film explores the complex emotional entanglements of these three characters.

Wright's film draws the viewer into a grim, subterranean world dominated by violence and human desperation. As a powerful drama which casts an unrelenting gaze on racial intolerance, the film is a radical departure from the gentle, quirky comedies which have critically dominated Australian feature filmmaking for the past decade. Recalls Wright grimly:

I thought a rough answer got made and I was pretty fatalistic about it. We got some negative feedback from the AFC members at first. They thought we were glorifying racist ideologies and that any attacks might be unnecessary. It was unfortunate that, if you gave the script to someone who wasn't sensitive to those problems, you certainly could end up with a film that glorified a group of racist hoodlums.

I don't think funding bodies are as brave as they could be... I suppose if you didn't know the person, or if you weren't sure of the person's abilities to stop the film from turning into something unnecessary, then you would be afraid. In the end, *Romper Stomper* got made because there were some very bold individuals at the AFC.

While Wright insists his film does not glorify "racist, hoodlums", he was careful to avoid a didactic response to the material:

I judged the skinheads in my mind, but in the film I am less judgemental. What I hate most of all is to be given a simple moral equation. Take movies and television screenside that. In the film I show what they do and say. "Now if you're keen to make up your mind about this." I suppose the film will attract attention because I chose to create pretty horrible characters.



LEFT: HANGING UNDER A DISCOUNT SIGN OF THE SKINHEADS WITH CAGLES (HANGING) AND JAGGED THE VETERANER (HANGING) (HANGING)

Ramper Ramper most certainly belongs to the skinheads. It is a documentary. Most of the time the outside, "real" world is a muffled presence somewhere beyond the signs and the signs.

It's an odd thing to say, but I didn't want to alienate anyone from the audience who is like the people in our film. I didn't want skinheads to see there and say, "This guy is talking about putting us into some sort of perspective that we don't see as being real." We're interested only in our psychology. I wanted to be true to that psychology and true to that world, even though that psychology all comes to rubbish in the end.

Wright did extensive research for the film. While actual skinheads would not come forward, those who had passed through that stage of their lives agreed to discuss their views with him. What Wright discovered from these people was an ideology informed by an undercurrent of frustration.

Skinheads are trying to hold onto a dream. It is a nightmare as far as the rest of the world is concerned, but a dream to them. Men feel disenfranchised, excluded and overlooked. They're angry and fiercely autonomous. They reject foreign culture. They express all of their fears through nationalism. They want to

belong, so they belong to each other. They hold onto the idea of the nation as something to belong to. They want to belong because belonging is to have meaning, and that's what they crave. The meaning is ugly and grotesque, but they derive a lot of strength from the sense of belonging.

It was, in part, the dramatic potential of skinheads which attracted Wright to the subject matter.

Skin culture is bold and imposing. Skinheads have strong views and they know what they want, which makes them good material for drama, no matter how morally bankrupt they are. One is intrigued by outsiders no matter how odd. Skinheads were interesting to me precisely because they go beyond what is acceptable behaviour.

According to *Ramper Ramper*'s producer Daniel Schaff, it is Wright's maverick approach to his subject matter which distinguishes him as a filmmaker.

Geoff is prepared to do things as his treatment of stories and characters that others will not. He is willing to take things to the edge. Australian filmmakers have a tendency to stick to the middle, the middle ground, but Geoff is willing to go out on a limb.

GEOFFREY WRIGHT:

"Most Australian films lack motivated characters.

The characters don't seem to want anything very much. There doesn't seem to be any dramatic mainspring. There's not much at stake.

I think most Australian films are dull."



Russell Crowe as the hero of *Hacks*; Daniel Pollock as the wife-driven Davey and newcomer Jacqueline McKenzie as the movie-star girl who joins the gang

Russell Crowe (who has emerged as one of Australia's most sought-after actors appearing in Mark Joffe's *Spinalised*, Joseph Moorehouse's *Providence*, most recently, in Ann Turner's movie project, *Hammer over the Bush*) was perfect in the role of Hacks. "Russell looks right for a star," explains Wright. "He is a well-built, chiseled, there is a headstrong element to Russell, combined with a certain degree of resilience and impudence, which I think was perfect for the character."

Rampage Stomper marks the film debut of Jacqueline McKenzie, a NIDA graduate with an impressive list of stage credits to her name. Wright directed a certain amount of rehearsal in McKenzie, which he felt would work well for the character of Gabi.

McKenzie is bold, courageous and natural. So many other young actors are corrupted by working on television and they want to believe their own publicity. They worry about damaging their image. Jacqueline was hard working and willing to try anything.

Perhaps the most challenging role of all was that of Davey, the difficult young boy who falls in love with Gabi, yet cannot



express his feelings. Says Wright,

Davey isn't a very articulate character. I can hear someone who for the most part isn't an outsider. The other two are Davey but Davey is more a mature character. Davey isn't a complete personality. He has to draw himself from Hacks in order to be that. That was a problem for Daniel Pollock as a performer, because he was looking for an interesting role while the character seemed reactive. Pollock kept Davey a great deal of subtlety and vulnerability.

Rampage Stomper is brimming with action and energy, yet the film has a literary atmosphere. Wright, who illustrated in *Love By Day* the exchanges between lovers are sometimes unspoken and even clumsy, continues to adhere Hollywood solutions to romance.

Rampage Stomper is full of desperate people who are full of anger and hate, caught up in a situation of their own devising. Gabi and Davey happen to find something in her movie world. They or people who are not used to romance. Desires to do a love story that wasn't heavy handed or sentimental. The two simply meet up to find each other in the film, there is really more to come. You could almost do another film with these characters, but I think we will leave them there. ■



BOB ELLIS'

THE NOSTRA



PRODUCTION OVERVIEW



"luminous

human cockroach" is how

Bob Ellis describes Elkin, the central character in his latest and most personal film.

The *Neobrother Kid* is based on his own youth as a Seventh Day Adventist heaver on earth. Not that it felt like one: the end of the world was always a night and misadventure coming was purchased by a growing libido.

In what is one of the best examples of a left-handed compulsion, Ellis says of the casting process: "I quickly realized that Noah Taylor would be the only actor capable of such a role." But Ellis is not casting experience on Taylor. Although the film has a strong underlying physical foundation, it exists in a world of Ellis' imagination. Most of the characters are composites. "One is certainly a combination of three people: Les Murray, Roy MacKenzie and Dick Bracken."

And the phrase "luminous human cockroach" is, in reality, self-deprecating. But despite a degree of cleaning himself in the making of the film, Ellis has both and honest about the difference between himself and Noah Taylor's Elkin.

I'm glad to say I was much better looking, but I had much less charm. He is tremendously charming, wherever he goes. Even when he does all the grubby things and tricks, he makes friends where I used to make enemies.

But Ellis has kept many of his enemies, and has asked that the names of one of them be edited out of the story, to avoid unnecessary angst. Such is the power of an Ellis misadventure. But then he is a passionate man, a man of words and his page, a lover of melancholy and often a bare soul. He is a writer whose usage among his peers has indeed become like that of a luminous cockroach, a survivor amidst the unbearable heat of a cruel world. No wonder, then, that this self-revealing work was put out in three days.

WRITTEN, DIRECTED, CASTING
AND EDITED BY BOB ELLIS
WRITER PRODUCTION COO: BOB ELLIS
BY THE WOODS-ARMED BOY

DAMUS KID

PRODUCTION REPORT BY ANDREW L. URBAN

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROBERT McFARLANE

The Nostradamus Kid



Just sort of like worried on some thing. Although the script has been trimmed back a fair bit, and there have been a couple of gaff lines added to it, it remains substantially as it was written. A discharge — an explosion — an outbreak. It was terribly painful writing it.

David Ferguson asked me to write this and gave me \$2000 to do so. But I was frightened by it, it delayed and delayed for about a year, and Putnam got pissed off with me and sent away. Then I wrote it, without drawing a breath, in fear of Putnam.

What Ellis wrote was a script for a film that Australians so rarely make: a personality, thick with a mixture of private imaginings, the rich aroma of linked seductions and scuffling youth, the search for meaningful existence and the best possible effect on strangers.

There are certainly elements that can be found in Fleming, which Ellis regards as the best Australian film he has seen, although he acknowledges its popularity was deflated by an appalling title. Clearly, Ellis admires John Dugan's filmmaking:

Superbly precise and witty writing, masterfully controlled direction and camerawork, impeccable performances and a sort of achingly universal story that everybody who's ever been a kid, which means everybody, can identify with. I was very impressed with the fact that my then nine-year-old daughter got off on it.

It is also possible that *The Year My Voice Broke* is the best Australian film. There's not much between the two.

Ellis is known to passionately care about Australian culture and to be a defender of it. But does he think Australian culture is automatically displayed on the screen by a director?

An interesting example is *The Four My Voice Broke*, which is very much set in his Australian country town. But it also resembles a lot of Polish and Czechoslovakian films that we've seen.

There's an intensely universal cultural link there with European culture that goes back from Galsworthy to Musil and embraces parts, though not all, of the continent. It doesn't criticize any of America.

The mistake people always make is in thinking we have something in common with Americans. Nobody has anything in common with Americans. They are a facade, a sales pitch, a bullshit act. They're not a culture; they're a 'sell'.

As for *The Nostradamus Kid*, Ellis says it started out as one thing, but, while shooting it, he never developed into a film comparable to *The Graduate*.

It's a gentle reminder courtesy about the end of the world, based on my experiences as an adolescent at university and two years' concern with the end of the world, including the Cuban missile crisis in 1962 when I persuaded [now an elderly] daughter to go with me in her father's stolen car to the mountains, to avoid the certain atomic holocaust on Sydney. I had to bring back in my daughter and the car, and then down the dreadful man who put a court order on me.

No, it's not a coming-of-age film. Ellis never comes of age. He's miserable. But is making the film a catharsis for Ellis?

Well, yes, to some extent, but it was more so in the writing than in the making. The making is more like a job.

TOP: GUY FORD; LEFT: JENNIFER LOREN; CARRON AND GUYAN: GUYAN; BOTTOM: GUYAN
PHOTO: PETER BARNES AND WENDLAND (STYL: BRYAN); THE NOSTRADAMUS KID

"It's a gentle romantic comedy about the end of the world, based on my experiences as an adolescent at university, and two encounters with the end of the world, set during the Cuban missile crisis in 1962..."



On the other hand, it has involved the joy of watching Noah Taylor at work. He is a sort of genius of cinema like Keanu or Chaplin. He adds so much to the bare bones of the original story, just in personal quarters.

Why "gentle" comedy? Are the laughs gentle, or the people?

If you just say "comedy" people might think you are employing Richard Pryor, and it's important not to give that impression. The humor is that which comes out of observed truth.

In the main, you would say Woody Allen's comedies are gentle, whereas *Midwinters* are not.

To what extent does Ellis think his new set of film mainstream audiences will want to see?

Embarking on it, I thought it was not much more than an arthouse film. But now I think it's going to be very popular indeed, particularly with kids, as they say *The Big Shave*, or should have been. There has been a big change because it's much more stylish than when I wrote it. I thought it was going to be like *Wildcat 21*.

The Nerveless Kid comes at a crucial time in the Ellis' life. He is turning 50, for one thing, and as a filmmaker he welcomes the fact that, after a few rather bad experiences, that is by far the easiest and most relaxed. It is also a film that stands alone, apart from the rest of his body of work.

Having written it, and having expelled that great sigh of release, there is something else the making of a film by which Ellis will be judged as a filmmaker.

About 5 months ago I thought, "This is ridiculous. I should [give up] film and I write really good novel and I write another one", and so on. But now it's fairly obvious that I should do a series of films like *Preston Stinger*. I should do five or six or seven really funny comedies and maybe do other things as well.

There's one I've written which is *Scorpus*, called *The Gelfin* *Alien*, about two drunk, Australian, 40-year-old divorced lawyers bashing up 60 miles from Chernobyl and falling in love with a Russian girl.

I'd also love to do a film that's set in the ancient kingdom of the *Nation Romaine* in Melbourne. For instance, there's all these

The Nostradamus Kid



bearded, drunk, middle-aged bastards with teenage women being tortured in his acts and chased by gauges and falling down pissed and so on. I'd like to do a Miles Forman-type film about that sort of thing.

Ellis doesn't only see *The Nostradamus Kid* as a new direction, but also a challenge to prove his working relationships. "It's important politically for me, it shows that people can work with me without looking sideways out of lines, holding their breath."

They can, or so Roger Simpson assumes one. Simpson, Le Mesurier Films worked with Ellis on the forthcoming British mini-series, *The Spender Trail*, based on Malcolm Turnbull's account of the infamous case in which Margaret Thatcher's Government tried to suppress a book by ex-spy Peter Wright.

Ellis and Stephen Remsey collaborated on the script of the mini-series — they had collaborated earlier on *The True Believer* script — and Simpson found the process thoroughly enjoyable and professional.

It was during those months of developing the script that Ellis again brought out his screenplay for *The Nostradamus Kid*. Again, because it has a history going back some ten years, when David Putnam first handed over the five big ones. But by this stage, Putnam had been bought out and the Australian Film Commission was paying for the development.

Roger Simpson and his partner Roger Le Mesurier instantly liked the script. They were far from put off by its age and indeed welcomed the fact that the work has had a prolonged gestation. Says Simpson:

Where our industry could do with improvement is a better, longer script-development process. Producers tend to be so impatient, happy with getting three drafts

There is a lot of development money around, more than in a lot of countries, so we have no complaints there. But we need

to spend more time on the scripts. In America, they think nothing of doing 12 or 14 drafts.

Simpson and his partner submitted the script to the Fifth Finance Corporation's second Trust Film Fund, but were prepared to take a further if it was not successful. But it was, and Simpson pays tribute to the IFP for making it happen.

Various people have tried to get it made, including Rob, and the project was in pretty good shape, although we felt it was under-budgeted. It's quite an ambitious script, but with very fine writing, the sort of script you seldom see. We were puzzled why it had not been made. Rob had floated off directing it, and we had worked out a good relationship. Besides, we outnumber him, three producers to one director.

The third producer is Terry Jennings, who has been taken aboard as Simpson, Le Mesurier Films' first experience in features.

Primarily a television production house, the company has only one previous experience with features, and an unhappy one at that, with *Spang 7* (1981). Simpson explains, once there, they have been only thinking about making films: "It was the first time that they are actually making, the first of several more, all around \$4 million. Most of our films will have a big television element, like a pre-sale for a Movie of the Week, because of our international contacts. That's where our knowledge and connections are."

For Simpson, Le Mesurier, it is the opening of a chapter: for Rob Ellis, it is more like the closing of one. If the writing was a cathartic explosion, the making of the film is a shiver of creative pleasure for him. He goes to recreate major moments of his childhood, to work with a deceased director of photography, Geoff Burton, and to get Miranda Otto as Jenny, the girl of his — also Ellis's — dreams.

Miranda Otto, who turns 24 on December 15, is just as handsome as Naomi Taylor, with freshness stamped all over her. After making films such as *Emma's War* and *The Place at the Cross*, Otto went to NIDA. Almost as soon as she finished her course, she was cast in the title role in *The Girl Who Came Late*, made just a year ago. She had Christmas off, then began work on the latest (yet-to-be-released) Gillian Armstrong film, *The Last Days of the Moon*, went on to the mini-series, *Henry II*, a play on stage and, now, *The Nostradamus Kid*.

Jenny is 18, rich, confident, to the point of seeming cold at times, detached even, but capable of warmth. She comes from a rich family, but her "confidence" encompasses an insecurity, where she is unable "to relate" with their own universal love. Otto:

The first thing I look for in a script is the pain — what pains the character most. It doesn't have to come out in the script, but I

**"I do resent the idea that I'm a movie
who can't count and who only has a nodding acquaintance
with the oblations of the planet and so on.
I think I'm better than that."**

have to be able to identify it. I am really fascinated by pain, it is often the thing that drives a character.

It is a surprise to learn that Otto can be very temperamental, even on set.

I try to control it. I feel that I have a right to be in my own world, but if so had things if a fellow actor people. It's a part of being very forth on myself. At NIDA, I even hit myself sometimes. It's destruction and people say I'm very serious person. But I would really like to be able to get on and mix with everyone and be easy-going.

But Otto gets distracted very easily, and she works better if she keeps to herself. At present, she is in a strange career vacuum, having made three films almost back-to-back, each with totally different characters, each filled with passion, and yet none has been released. It seems as though her performances have been unknown. The Girl Who Came Late will be released around June 1992, then *Cher Noon* about August and finally *Natasha's Kid* perhaps next October. By the end of 1992, Miranda Otto could well be the flower of the month in the Australian screen landscape.

What happens, she feels confident it won't affect her. "I learnt early, even before NIDA, not to do a job - over - just for the money. If you don't do it well, it'll stuff you up long term."

There seems to be no danger of that here. Ellis is delighted.

Making the film and writing it is like the difference between composing and conducting, or the difference between writing a speech and delivering it. But it's something more, too. Because you have such good actors, and such good young actors, there is something else that is going on, which is a kind of poetic attitude play.

Producer Terry Jennings says Ellis is able to realise the film because it is so dialogue based, as when Ellis.

Ellis has always been noted as a wonderful and skilful writer, one in love with words. Does he feel comfortable with that description?

Sure, I don't mind that. But I do resent the idea that I'm a movie who can't count and who only has a nodding acquaintance with the oblations of the planet and so on. I think I'm better than that.

There are two sides to me, one is a sort of a rat, a quick mover who can alone in Chinese restaurants reading *Phantom Eye*, and the other is someone who is almost precisely like a politician, somebody who works with the masses. There's an amount of adrenaline that hits me when there's a lot of like-minded people in the room. Suddenly my brain improves with stimulation and conversation. And so, this kind of a setting I'm a bit

convinced, I'm not very good without a person across the table. I'm pretty good with four people at the table. I'm really good with a room full and I'm terrible with a ball ball and a microphone.

Another aspect producer Terry Jennings relates about *The Natashas Kid* is its unique setting.

The film looks at a rarely seen area of Australia, a Seventh Day Adventist Camp in the 1950s, and Sydney university life in the early '60s, through the eyes of a boy who first acquires a taste for drink, women and philosophy.

But why is Ellis so concerned of the imminent end of the world? Ellis:

I was brought up that way. It was a psychological factor because at the time I was taking a lot of medications, which were later known as quids.

The Cuban missile crisis was the most dangerous night in the world's history. And, if the nuclear holocaust was going to be 'on', it was going to be in the biggest city in Australia.

This preening for the end of the world is actually a universal thing. I am going to write a book to be published in 1999 called *The Peace Machine*, about all the end of the world scenarios that media authors a lot of money over the past 250 years. Philosophically we built in love with the end of the world, and the character is, too. But he comes out in forms funny and, which is a non-religious.

Yet *The Seventh Day Adventists* need not worry. The film, says Ellis, is very kind to them.

I think the Adventists are good people. They are just wrong on about 11 major points. The way they were portrayed in *Dark Angels* was dead right. You know how warm and kindly they were? They are like that.

But Ellis left their warm and kindly embrace, all the same. And the final twist that made him leave was in the film. "But I know it when you see it."



SECOND FROM LEFT: JERRY LINDENBAUM, OTTO, AND ELLIS. THE NATASHAS KID: OTTO, ELLIS, AND LINDENBAUM. OTTO, ELLIS, AND LINDENBAUM. OTTO, ELLIS, AND LINDENBAUM. OTTO, ELLIS, AND LINDENBAUM.

WIND

CARROLL BALLARD



PICTURE PREVIEW



...is the new feature

*of Carroll Ballard, the acclaimed
American director of **THE BLACK STALLION**
(1979) and **NEVER GYR WOLF** (1983).*

*It is an adventure drama based loosely on the 1952 and '57 America's
Cups, which saw an epic struggle for 12-metre sailing supremacy
between Australia and the U.S. Scriptwriter Rudy Wurlitzer says there is
an obvious reference to sailing people and that, "Part of the fabric of*

*America was made in part-time sailing men with genuine racing skills. It is not sailing
as we see it in the movies. It is a hard, fast, fast-paced, fast-paced, fast-paced, fast-paced,
fast-paced, fast-paced, fast-paced, fast-paced, fast-paced, fast-paced, fast-paced, fast-paced,
fast-paced, fast-paced, fast-paced, fast-paced, fast-paced, fast-paced, fast-paced, fast-paced,*

*the film, and the tension between the characters, is the theme of class
struggle, between people who own their own money and those who
don't."*

*Director Ballard adds: "I liked the idea of a film that isn't about
people killing each other. Sailing is like a big war game where nobody
gets killed. . . . These are people who stake their whole lives on a
whiff of wind. It's very competitive, and that's one of the themes of
the film: guys who enjoy being winners."*

*The cast includes Matthew Modine, Jonathan Demme, Cliff Robertson
and Jack Thompson. It is being produced by Mita Farnsworth and Tom
Lobby, with Francis Coppola serving as one of the executive producers.
The film's technical adviser was Peter Gilmore, who is currently part of
the "Spirit of Australia" team vying for the 1982 America's Cup.
Wurlitzer's earlier works of fiction began in Farnsworth, Mita Farnsworth,
on 20 February 1983. It is now in post-production.*



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DAVID CAESAR'S
GREEN



N K E E P I N G

PRODUCTION REPORT BY PETER GALVIN

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PHILIP LE MESURIER



enny is in trouble.

Employed as greenkeeper at the local bowls club,

he has come up against a problem he doesn't know

how to fix.

The greens are dying, the club championships are coming up and the club manager is beginning to catch on to the fact that Lenny (Mark Link) isn't really who he says he is. Milton (Syd Condecott), the longtime club champion, is on to Lenny as well. He wants to use him to sabotage the efforts of his ancient rival, Rikyu (Katsuhiko Murayama), the Japanese schoolboy who plays the game like a virtuoso.

For the seemingly hapless greenkeeper, domestic life offers no respite. The garden is over-run and it looks like Sue (Lara Henley), Lenny's wife, doesn't care about anything any more—even the \$25,000 she owes Dave (Lough Russell), the local drug dealer and a walking chapter of bad history from Lenny's past. For Sue, everything is easier to cope with through a marijuana haze, even a marriage that is looking glum on its feet. Lenny just keeps thinking, "It'll be all right. I just need some time." Trouble is, there's no time left.

Greenkeeping seems to be a serious film that is also very funny. Based on a wry, brilliant Australian script, it is the first feature to be written and directed by Australian Film Television & Radio School graduate, David Caesar.

Lawn bowls is among the most graceful of sports and, as befits its setting, Caesar's script is gentle, so rich in character and incident that one can't help but be touched by the authenticity of the writing. Caesar has deftly sketched a total world from his working-class background, treating his characters with affection and flooding the screen in the everyday. His fondness for Bill Forsyth's "gothic comedies," particularly *Local Hero*, is clearly evident. There is the whimsical treatment of serious themes (in this film, racism/sexophobia) that never denigrates the subject, but rather creates a sense of optimism



around the conflict of identity. Like Forsyth, too, Caesar carefully builds the comedy around his characters, holding back the plot twists and resolving the conflicts in a way that is both logical and totally unexpected.

Caesar may welcome the comparisons to Forsyth's work, but *Greenkeeping* possesses a tougher sense of irony and a sense of humor that is in part physical (there are many clever visual gags as well as verbal). The dialogue is a high point: Fast, brittle, pointed and often surprisingly funny, it is more reminiscent of

STYLING: JANEY LITTLE; THE PRODUCTION, INCLUDING THE TROUBLED AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITY STUDENT, MARK MURRAY-BURBANK, ABOVE (BY LARA HENLEY); ABOVE'S HUSBAND AND A MEMBER OF THE CLUB: DAVID CAESAR (UNIDENTIFIED).

Greenkeeping



maker of Caesar's favourite film, Barry Levinson's *Tin Men*. Whatever the comparisons in style are, what exists in *Greenfingers* is a specific cultural milieu – an Australian milieu – that is neither cloying nor precious.

Greenfingers' producer is Gloria Rowe, who has been working with Caesar for a couple of years developing projects, including the already legendary *"Prime Mover"*, a tough, brutal script about truck driving, the south and obscenity. Rowe has already produced one film with Caesar – the slick and very successful documentary *Bodywork*. Unlike the still in-development *"Prime Mover"* (which Caesar wrote in 1983), *Greenfingers* happened first, Rowe explains.

Greenfingers was written in the matter of a month. It was "achievable." It and we could make this film quickly within the budget confines of an Australian feature.

The Australian Film Commission has set aside an amount of money for first-time directors, which David is. We are actually making this feature for less than \$1 million. When people see it, they won't believe it.

We are shooting the film in four weeks and are having absolutely no problems in doing this. It has turned out to be quite an easy film to make, only because David Caesar designed it that way.

Caesar was meticulous with his preparations. Every scene was completely storyboarded and Caesar produced a diagram for every setup.

In scope, the film appears modest, with just two principal locations: the bachelors' club, and Larry and Sue's fibro cottage. But Rowe explains that there are six or seven locations within the bachelors' club.

Caesar, ever conscious of producing a "cinematic event" for the audience, has designed the film for some elaborate, inventive and rather comic

camera set-ups, including "bowling cars", which gives the audience a grass-high view of the action on the green, and "imagine cars", which speaks for itself. The grip crew, headed by Danny Lockie, built the gear on spec.

The tiny club that is *Greenfingers*' main set is slung along, at the bottom of a dead-end street, aiming to catch byones in the tree-lined avenue of a Sydney suburb. Keith Holmes, production designer, explains the concept of achieving a comic look for the film.

It's fairly straightforward as a look but, because it's a comic film, there's things that have been pushed a lot further than they would be in reality. I started applying colours as much as possible. The exteriors are sun-bleached and the interiors [for the bowling club] I wanted to look very golden, with layers of tobacco-stained colours.

Because there's this dream about the yellowing greens in the club, I thought it would be a nice idea to have a lot of fresh greens in the other location, Larry's house. This just exaggerates Larry's frustrations. That nothing is alive in Larry's house: they're all representations, like floral patterns on a lounge.

The director of photography, Simon Smith, another APTES graduate, is working fast and enthusiastically on this his first feature.

We've had great weather, which was crucial to the look we decided on: sharp shadows, bright sunlight and very intense colours, which you can see in the art direction. We're using Kodak 500 daylight stock. Whenever we can, we're going for a very warm look, using filters.

There are visual echoes of the bowling ball throughout the film. I've found it goes the way that comic aspects of the film have determined ways of shooting. You can't help but think comedy, especially when you get such wonderful actors together. Often says that we've decided to shoot get turned on their head because we want to see some devil from an actor.



Greenkeeping

would. But a lot of people thought that a film set in a beach club didn't sound very exciting, so basically it was a matter of convincing people, and *Film on Stage* was the opportunity to do that.

We got a full house and they really enjoyed it, laughing in all the right places. A lot of people came up afterwards, including a few producers trying to find out whether anyone had the rights.

On the basis of *Film on Stage*, it gained a lot of momentum and we went to the AFC, which was keen but felt the script needed a lot of work—which it did. So, I spent the past few months doing that.

I've been in the industry now for ten years and, in terms of my development as a filmmaker, the next step was to make a low-budget feature. So, the scale of the production has been contained. There are basically two locations and it is a four-week shoot. If it had rained, we would have been fucked. But it hasn't, and many of the exteriors are in bright sunlight, which makes the whole thing glow.

Simon Smith, the DOP, has done an amazing job. I think people aren't going to believe we've done the film for the amount of money we have. In terms of production values—the look, the design, the amount of camera movements—they're going to say it's a \$3 million movie.

The crew is fantastic. Linda [Ray] on continuity has saved my arse so many times. She would say after a take, "We need another close-up of David", and I'd go, "All right", and he gradually shows it. I'd see the stuff in the rushes the next day and say, "Thank you, Linda." Before, I had no idea what a continuity person really did.

The other thing is the actors. We had two weeks of rehearsal, which isn't enough, but it's better than none. It's been amazing having good actors. Once they found their characters in rehearsal, they've been there all the time. The secondary characters are there all the time, too. There's no weak link in the chain. The performances are so good, not because I think I'm a really great director, but because we cast so well.

The comedy in the script has a lot of warmth and vigour, but the film is quite dense thematically, so well.

I was interested in exploring notions of racism and change. A beach club is like a microcosm of Australia. For example, the club's barmaid, Gina [Gin Curless], is a young Greek girl who hates Asians. And then there are the club members, most of them diggers, who really like, and are friendly to, Hiko [Kazuo Mikoshiba], the Japanese boy.

An important part of the story is the fact that the greenkeeper, Lenny [Mark Little], has this fundamental belief of that "it'll be all right on the day." He feels he shouldn't worry. The film that he has no qualifications, and that if something goes wrong he'll read a book to figure it out, doesn't really



matter. But the club is starting to get into financial difficulties, and they won't accept that any more. So, the film is talking about a level of complacency, a level that Lenny finds acceptable in his life.

There's a lot of family stuff as well. It's about the relationship between Lenny and his wife, Sue [Lise Hemley], and the way it changes. She still wants to live in the days when they used to grow plants and smoke lots of drugs and lead a very hedonistic lifestyle. She still worships Lenny around, but all their other friends have settled down and got proper jobs. She wants to live in the past, whereas Lenny wants to change. He used to grow drugs, went to gaol, then got a job as a greenkeeper, which he's trying to bluff his way through.

The script refuses to mope about the relationships. The message that "You can't live in the past" may appear late, but in the context of these characters and this environment it takes on a great deal of weight.

Exactly. You can't live in the past, whether it's in terms of a nation or a beach club, with old diggers refusing to accept Asians, or whether it's a woman who wants to take drugs and party all the time like she used to ten years ago.

The script recalls the gentle, character-based humour often characterised by the Alexander Mackendrick's Ealing comedies, most notably *The Man in the White Suit* (1951). The most successful contemporary interpretation of that style are Bill Forsyth's films, but whereas Forsyth tends to be whimsical, *Greenkeeping* has a lot of sharp lines in the verbal jokes. It recalls more Barry Levinson's Baltimore movies, *Smear* and *The*

"I don't believe in cinema as cinema at all. The sort of films I like can be shown to anybody. Cinema in Australia should be, and to a certain extent is, an extension of people sitting in the pub talking ballshit to one another."

Greenkeeping is like Forayth and Levinson films. I like to call the style of cinema "Australian whinge." Mark Lister and I have also been talking about the film as a new style of filmmaking called "dag video."

What does that mean?

Well, the characters are what you might call dags. They are not the sort of people who would be very acceptable at an art opening. They're ordinary.

I'm sure aestheticians won't be impressed at all. For a start, the characters speak English. Live in Australia and don't want to leave. There must be something fundamentally wrong with them, I suppose. They're not depressed all the time, which is another reason the aestheticians won't like the film. Some of them deal with their own problems and blame the rest of the world.

Do you think *Greenkeeping* has a humanistic point of view?

It's human-based. It doesn't pass moral judgement on any characters. There is a racist character in the club, but I think he does have some human values at the end of the day. Even the best characters are more black aspects to them. I'm not really fond of black-and-white notions of good and evil, right or wrong.

In the script, *Australians* appear a rather individualist lot.

They are, but I don't think that's such a bad thing. There's something very defined about standing in the middle of a paddock, rolling balls down it, and then sitting down to have a beer and some polite conversation.

But there is a sinister edge to this, Milton, the disruption hostler, tends to represent all that is unpleasant about the Australian ethos.

He changes the rules all the time and he manipulates Lenny. In a way, that's how Australia often works. If the rules don't go your way, you change them. But you can't get away with it any more. That's the message of the film.

It's also saying that Australia is changing, whether you like it or not.

Australians have to accept what they are becoming, a multi-cultural, non-Anglo-Saxon-Geltic nation.

That's one of the best things about Australian culture. Australians always accept change, more so than, say, the American. Americans would never turn something like the KKK.

Australians will curse, whinge and carry on about Asian, but then they'll be down at the club eating Chinese.

You find that ironic?

It is. That's the nature of life in Australia, whereas worry is something Americans seem allergic to. Irony is a very culturally specific thing. Mainstream American culture doesn't have it, although a lot of American Jewish humour is based on it.

The sort of things I look to, apart from Bill Forayth and Barry Levinson, are Australian writers like Henry Lawson and, more recently, Tim Winton. Lawson's stuff is humane. It isn't about passing judgement on people, which I think is an

important thing in films. I leave that up to the audience. If they want to decide whether people are completely fucked, then that's their business. I certainly don't think, as I make it, that there are any such characters in this film.

Your view is a nod toward the populists' view. In cinema, the archetype would be the films of Frank Capra.

I have no desire to be seen as an intellectual filmmaker. I don't believe in cinema as cinema at all. The sort of films I like can be shown to anybody. Cinema in Australia should be, and to a certain extent is, an extension of people sitting in the pub talking ballshit to one another. The sort of things people say to one another in pubs are just yours with a punch line. It works as a form of folklore, which is about the mores and substance of a society. It's not about an outsider looking in.

My films aren't about me coming in as a filmmaker into a community and making films about it. I've been around bowling clubs all my life. I've grown up with people like Lenny. I make films about where I come from. Ninety percent of the dialogue in the film is what I've heard. The only real skill I have as a writer is that I can remember whole conversations I hear between people on buses and in clubs and everywhere else.



LEFT: DAVID GERARD; RIGHT: ROSE DUNN; TOP: AN OTHER MENTION WHO PLAYS "GOLF IN THE STREET" ON A GERARD STING-ORIGIN, DISSEMINATED

Greenkeeping



ADRIAN CROFT/KEITH BROAD/COURTESY JEFFREY MORGENTHAU

But haven't you applied to your script more than 100 actual rejections than you care to admit?

What I do is not an intellectual exercise but a craft exercise. It's about logic. I don't think being intelligent and being intellectual are the same thing. If you were down to the pub and asked people about the society they live in, what's wrong with it and the things they like, well that's what my films are doing.

You have, on the basis of a few shorts, a reputation for finding a strong visual style for the material, most particularly in *Babywark*. What style will *Greenkeeping* have?

It's somewhere between Fox Woo Herman and Jacques Tati. I know it's a cliché and an over-used term, but the look is "heightened realism". But for *Greenkeeping* I think it's appropriate.

Keith Holmes, the production designer, has dressed Lenny's house in floral patterns. The carpet looks like astro-turf! And the grass we've painted a brighter green than grass is. We have also used a lot of aerial and craning shots so you can see people surrounded by green.

I've been very fortunate in getting a very good crew who work very fast, because we only have four weeks to shoot the film. And I'd say half of it is tracking, craning or moving in some way.

One of the things I was very conscious of when writing the film was that it wasn't going to look like a tele-movie. There's a lot of dialogue in the film, but it's very dynamic. It's people having conversations on the run across the green and things like that. None of the camera movement is gratuitous. It's always in context with the story, motivated by an action or by revealing something.

A little storyline in the film is the ragget that keeps attacking Lenny's head when he's working on the green. We built this crane, which we have above Lenny, and it swoops down on his head. Now, there's a whole sequence in the film where Lenny is attacked by a magpie on Ladies' Bowls Day and all the women on play with wickerwork containers on their heads, or with their sunglasses on backwards. In the country where I grew up, that's what you used to do: drive a face on an wickerwork container and wear it backwards on your head, that way birds will never attack your real face. I don't know whether they would do it at a bowling club. It's real but it's also surreal.

What are some of the visual motifs in the film?

As the grass on the bowling green gets sicker, it turns yellow to brown. At Lenny and Sue's home, the green carpet is covered by magazines and clothes and, as the film progresses, they get taken away. In the bedroom of their house there is a green bedspread which is folded down at the beginning of the film, but it then gradually covers the bed. So, as the bowling green dies, the house gets greener.

There's a lot of little things like that and they're very subtle. For example, all the scenes at the bowls club and at the house are at sunset. But the last quarter of the film is the last day and it starts to dawn.

Now, the sort of audience I'm hoping for is *Cinema 8*, *Complicité* and the *Manly Tropic*—but in the suburbs. And I don't think this audience is going to sit and ponder the seriousness of the dawn-and-dusk motif, but I do think that those elements are a part of your craft. I do think people subconsciously feel that stuff. I don't think people pondered the seriousness of *Tin Alen* and the fact that the characters sold aluminium cladding—which is an amazing metaphor for America—but I do think audiences would have felt the nature of denial in their society. I don't think that makes the film difficult.

Sue is an unusual character for Australian cinema, let alone a comedy.

As a male writer, you get away with writing female characters that are one dimensional—this happens throughout world cinema. But the majority of this crew are women and you find really soon that you can't get away with it. You have to fix it.

I think it's a bit unfair that I have to fix up my female characters when no one else does.

What's next?

Finish this properly. We will have "Prime Mover" sitting there, and there's another smaller scale project about bushrangers that I'd like to do.

One of the really good things about this experience is that before I don't think I was ready to do "Prime Mover", now I feel much more confident.

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RAY ARGALL'S **EIGHT**

BALL

Ray Argall's

Renew Home was the first of the acclaimed Australian films of the 1990s. Now, Argall is in post-production on his new film, **EIGHT BALL**.

Filmed in May and June this year, *Eight Ball* is another farcical comedy. Charlie is a young architect with everything going for him. Russell, the complete opposite, has just been released from prison. Their paths cross when Russell is employed to work on Charlie's latest project: the construction of a giant Wreny God as a tourist attraction for a small Victorian town. Argall wrote the screenplay with Harry Kershner and, as with *Renew Home*, the director of photography is Wendy Willkes, and the editor is Ken Sedgwick. The cast includes Matthew Feggetter (as Charlie), Paul Rhoads (Russell), with Lucy Shueh, Frankie J. Holden, Matthew Kirk, Ollie Hall, Angie Milliken and Deonirado Kelly. Financed by the FFG and Film Victoria, the film should be ready for release early in 1992.

PHOTOGRAPHS: JENNIFER A. WICKES





INTERVIEW

BY
ANA MARIA
BAHIANA



n. 1987

Kathryn

strange little movie caught the eye of critics and audiences in the U.S.: *New Dark*, a fascinating Gothic tale of vampires on the road in the wastelands of America. And the director was – and here critics usually held their breath in awe – a woman! “That confuses me”, says Kathryn Bigelow, the woman in question, “only because I don’t understand why. I wish there were more women out there, and I also wish it weren’t such a novelty. However, I understand how it could be unusual.”

Bigelow

born (in 1949) and raised in San Francisco, Bigelow graduated in the arts, first at the San Francisco Art Institute and then at the Whitney Museum in New York. She found herself fused with what she now calls "the ethnic literatures" of traditional visual arts, so, with a group of other interested painters and sculptors, Bigelow started dabbling in film as an expressive medium.

The passion attack immediately, and lasted. Bigelow enrolled in Columbia University's Graduate School of Film, where she studied under Miles Forman. In 1978, she completed her first project, *The Set Up*, a much-praised short film chronicling a violent street-gang confrontation. Three years later, Bigelow directed her first feature, *The Loveless*, a stylish indie movie starring William Baltus.

Bigelow's next film, *New Dark*, had a troubled post-production. "The company that made it lost its distribution [idea] while we were cutting the movie," recalls Bigelow. "They sold it to Danode Laurence, but DNO went bankrupt while it was releasing the picture. So, it happened twice on the one film! That's terrifying for a filmmaker." Still, when the film finally hit the major markets in 1987, it firmly established Bigelow as one of the most promising and interesting American filmmakers — "sex-gender specific", she adds with a mischievous grin.

Blue Steel (1989), a gripping thriller starring Jamie Lee Curtis and Ron Silver, and this year's surface-on-a-crane-rampage, *Point Break* (starring Patrick Swayze as his first post-*Grease* role, and Keanu Reeves), further expanded her already non-stylish action director, who, of course, also happens to be a woman, and is married to another master of the genre, James Cameron. "It's funny," she says. "Someone approaches me [Walter Hill], and says, 'Welcome, because you're a man, how do you make such and such a movie?'"

After making *Blue Steel*, where the female character is the driving narrative force, you chose to do *Point Break*, which is, essentially, a male-bonding picture. What attracted you to this project?

It had everything—characters with really great psychological dimension, action environment and setting which I thought offers a lot of possibilities. It's a world that hasn't been seen before. You might think you know a lot about surfing, but, when you analyze it under a microscope, it becomes very surprising: ritual, prayer, mythical and romantic.

The piece also had a theme whereby the visuals could be extraordinary and challenging, which is something I always look for. It was a pretty rich canvas to work with.

Did you do a lot of research into the Californian surfing community?

I met and talked to some of them. They have a really strange spirit and are very spiritual, but in a crude, unarticulate way. They don't communicate verbally and they're very Zen—there's no other way to describe it. It's like they have evolved to a higher state of consciousness.

Did you uncover any violent strains in the community, such as the one you portray in *Point Break*?

No, no, no. They're not violent. In the film, Bodhi [Patrick Swayze] says, "I hate violence," and that's very important for this character (a repressed homosexual who allows Johnny [Keanu Reeves], an FBI agent, a whole new way of looking at the world, and himself).

Surfers are not violent people unless they're pushed into a situation. There's certainly a lot of aggression out on the water, but surfing



"I don't think directing is a gender-related job.

Perceptions that women are better suited to certain types of material are just stereotypes; they're merely limitations."



is a singular quest and personal challenge. They put themselves in life-threatening situations every single day because they love it. They are very surprising.

You certainly portray them with an almost mythological dimension.

I look at things not in the specific but metaphorically. Politically, it's really interesting to keep those myths alive, to not buy that grid, that system, without challenging it. Maybe they don't articulate it, but writers do challenge the system. There's a myth here, an American spirit, they're like cowboys.

Their lifestyle is also very seductive: You begin to understand how they see the universe, why they give up their jobs and all their material things, get in a car with a surfboard and drive to the next break. They spend their entire lives going toward the next wave.

Did you get a lot of feedback on the fact that you, a female director, were shooting a macho-action film?

I had people saying that the audience would never know that this film was written and directed by a woman! [Laughs.]

I don't think directing is a gender-related job. Perceptions that women are better suited to certain types of material are just stereotypes; they're merely limitations.

Would you say, then, that there is a stereotype that women can only direct "soft" material?

I don't really know if that stereotype exists, because so few women direct. But if there is that stereotype, it's perceptual.

I can't disagree in the details. I think the other way around. Why aren't more women making the kind of action material I'm curious?

What was the starting point for your previous film, *Blue Steel*?

It all began with the idea of doing a woman action film. Not only has no woman ever done an action film, no woman has ever been at the center of one or the central character. Obviously I was fascinated by that, because I'm a woman watching all these action films and there's always a man at the center. You begin to identify with the man, with the more powerful character.

From that takeoff—deciding to put a woman in the center—we worked out what the ramifications would be. How would the movie? How was it different? Obviously, when a person is fighting for her life, for survival, there are universal aspects that transcend gender. To what extent is it separate to the fact that she's a woman?

We then put in a serial killer, gave her an obstacle and also made it a twisted, strange love story.

And for *New Dark*?

New Dark started because we wanted to do a Western. But no one will finance a Western, we thought. "Okay, how can we subvert the genre? Let's do a Western that disarms it in such a way that it gets sold as something else." Then we thought, "This, a vampire Western."

So it became a wonderful meld of two mythologies—the Western and its vampire movie. One reinforced the other. That sort of clicked.

Again, we came up with some characters and then put them in horrible situations to see what happened.

TOP: THE ABOVE MENTIONED (LARRY BERRY) MEETS BERRY (PATRICK SWINTON)
IN *EXTREME HILLS* & *POOR THING*
BOTTOM: JOHNNY AND PLEAS (JESSE PLEMONS), *ADAMS* (AMY ADAMS)

Kathryn Bigelow

FORREST, JONES, AND HIS PARENTS POPPUS (JEAN MARCUS), LEFT
REPORT TO THEIR AGENT AND MOTHER (JOAN MARCUS), RIGHT



When Anne Rice's vampire books took a big influence in your writing?

We were aware of them, but, when we were writing, we went straight to Brian Kober's *Devils*. The translation in the end comes straight from *Devils*. It was really the first major piece of writing on the subject.

Then our effort because: How can we redefine and reinvent this vampire mythology in a way that hasn't been done in writing or in the movies? So, first of all we decided not to call them vampires and, second, we took away all the Gothic aspects—castles, bats, silver bullets, crosses, stakes in the heart. Ours are modern vampires, American vampires, on the road. I don't judge what they are. They're creatures of the night, who must drink blood to survive. They are... curious.

What prompted you to make the transition from painting to film?

I felt painting was isolating and a little bit distant, whereas film has the potential to become an incredible social tool with which you can reach a mass audience. Some painting requires a certain amount of knowledge or education on the part of the viewer to be appreciated. Film is not like that. It must be accessible to work within a cinematic context.

Given that, the transition made a lot of sense. Film is accessible, challenging and very stylistic, very visual. It works as a narrative and I use it as a kind of modern literature. It's a very complex medium and I love it.

Were you always attracted to directing?

I've thought of it as 'directing', but it's a different way of making art. First I was doing painting, then I was making movies. Later, I realized that what I was doing was writing and directing, being a filmmaker. But I really just saw it as something out there, from the world of art to mainstream movie-making.

Does your art training help in the visual stylization of your films?

It's important, but I am drawn mainly to story and characters. That's the most important thing the visuals come early.

With my training, I can obsess on the visuals forever, and I do work on that. I film everything before we start filming. But I focus more on the story and characters, because that's what needs the work. No matter how beautiful a film looks, the most important thing is that the audience connects with the characters. You can

make a picture look insular and distract people from the emotions it has.

Your films show a certain fascination with the subject of violence. Is that a personal interest of yours?

I don't know. It's not necessarily a personal fascination, though I do like intensity in movies. I like high-impact movie-making. It's challenging, provocative. It makes you think. It opens you a little.

I'm just not drawn to material that makes you feel good instantly. I don't know why I go down more action films by George Miller, Sam Peckinpah, Martin Scorsese, [James] Cameron, Walter Hill. These are great filmmakers. It's high-impact with emotional involvement.

I'm also drawn to strong, dark characters you believe in and care about. I like putting characters in very intense situations, which are an organic extension of those characters and their story. Take the roadhouse scene of *Star Trek*. I know it's a very violent scene, but I couldn't imagine portraying those characters without that scene, without showing how they live. That is the truth of their life. I thought it was critical to the picture.

In *Blue Steel*, the guy is a serial killer. He's not someone who just wakes his gun around. He's a seriously damaged human being. You need the truth of his character, his psychosis.

So, I guess I believe in violence as a way to portray a character or a story faithfully. That doesn't preclude soft, emotional material that has no violence. It's just that the particular stories I've chosen are very intense.

Do you believe there is a feminine way of expressing violence in film?

I don't think there's a feminine way of expressing violence or dealing with it. There's only just the filmmaker's approach. I don't think it's gender specific. Violence is violence. Survival is survival. I don't think there's a feminine eye or a feminine voice. You have two eyes, and if you look in three dimensions and in a full range of colour. So can everybody. What about a woman's background would make that vision different?

In all my films, my characters, male and female, are fighting for their lives. That's a human thing.

As you said, women are still a minority when it comes to directing—especially directing their own scripts. But there have been a few changes this year, with important films like *Thelma & Louise*, *The Dancer and the Soldier* and *Resolving Blue* being written or directed by women. What, in your opinion, would be necessary for a major change in Hollywood's gender bias?

More women have to want to make movies. Maybe the desire is not there, because I have always believed that where there's a will, there's a way. I don't believe in luck. It's not a matter of the industry saying, "Okay, we want more women directors." A woman and a man should work under the same degree of assistance. In other words, it should be based on their projects and what they have to show behind them.

Women have to realize very early on that every conceivable occupation is open to them. I can't think of anything that would not be open to a woman. So, it's an educational thing. As babies, girls are given certain toys, boys are given certain toys, and certain films are developed and become encoded. If you just realize that anything is possible... and

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• The only one in the business that picks her own
gutters, some can't • I'd worship the ground she
walks on, if only she lived in a better neighbour-
hood, real mate • Bitch! Mamma! • Do you
suppose I could buy back my introduction to her?
Mamma! • She's gonna have it! She's gonna
get it! Mamma! • On the whole I'd rather be in
Philadelphia, w.c. man



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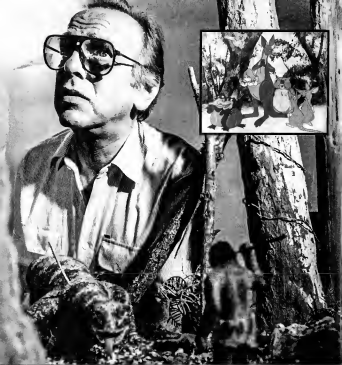


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Yoram



LEFT: YORAM GROSS; RIGHT: SCOTT HARRISON

ABOVE: LEFT: *THE FISHMAN* AND *THE NIGHT* IN 1970 AND THE *MASSACRE* IN 1971; RIGHT: GROSS (SEATED) AS DIRECTOR OF *THE POLISH FILM INSTITUTE*, WITH SUPERVISOR (STANDOUT) AND ASSISTANT, THE OTHER DIRECTOR, LARRY GAUL (NOT IN FRAME) AND THE WORLD (NOT IN FRAME)

YORAM GROSS IS PERHAPS AUSTRALIA'S MOST PROLIFIC FEATURE FILMMAKER. OVER THE PAST DECADE OR SO, GROSS HAS PRODUCED ABOUT A DOZEN ANIMATED FEATURES. THIS MAY COME AS NO SURPRISE GIVEN THAT ONE IS DEALING WITH ANIMATION. BUT THE ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF HANDS-ON WORK EACH ANIMATED FEATURE REQUIRES MAKES THAT AN EXTRAORDINARY ACCOMPLISHMENT

Raffaele Caporale Reports

At the age of 56, Yoram Gross was one of the first students to attend the newly-formed Polish Film Institute, founded by the renowned Jerzy Toeplitz. Gross later gained direct filmmaking experience as an assistant to such Polish directors as Eugeniusz Czerwik and Lech Kucharski, and to Dutch director Joris Ivens.

Gross moved to Israel in 1950, where he furthered his career as a composer, producer and director. Before arriving in Australia in 1968, his films included *Hospital Days*, *One Pound Only* and the award-winning *Chassidim sine Patria*.

Beginning at home in the early 1970s, Gross continued to develop his specialist technique of combining live action back-

ground with animation, a style he began experimenting with in Israel. He was awarded prizes at the Sydney Film Festival for his short films *The Fishman* and *The Night* in 1970 and 1971 respectively. Filming at this time also formed the Yoram Gross Film Studio—a tiny room in the fully-equipped student workshop—Gross had to compete in Australia and abroad with such well-established production houses as Disney and Hanna-Barbera. That he has managed to do so, and produce work which has been acknowledged worldwide, is a tribute to his confidence and vision.

Since the inception of the Yoram Gross Film Studio, the combination of live and animated action has been its trade mark. It takes a testimony of a personal signature. Yet, it is probable that no other film outspoke this technique as landmark commercial propositions than *Wile E. Coyote and Road Runner* (1988) by Robert Zemeckis and Richard Williams. This, however, is never belated by the quality or ingenuity of the work produced by Yoram Gross. The Studio's output still remains successfully marketed under the banner of "family entertainment" (more so overseas than in Australia), and one can assume this success is in part due to the fact that because animated feature films are so labour-intensive, as well as expensive, the technique of combining the two "realities" is a carefully considered economic requirement.

But this is really only half the picture. If a Gross feature looks quaint in comparison to the sophistication of a Roger Rabbit, that is merely a preliminary, knee-jerk reaction. A Gross feature compensates by the distinctiveness with which each feature goes about combining the combined live-action and animation, often

Gross

STUDIOS



Yoram Gross

overturning a number of artistic and cinematic forms. The experience of viewing a Gross film is one that is both unexpected and worthwhile, precisely in its form of film experimentation that the almost perfectly seamless integration of live and animated action in *Roger Rabbit* could not allow to arrange.

Gross' technique stands to have a delicate and complex affinity with film practices of the 1930s, when experimentation with the medium was rife among painters and musicians especially. A good deal of Gross' films tend to take up the practices of "direct film" (not to be confused with the "direct cinema" movement of the 1960s)

Zero, for instance, utilizes World War II footage and the

actors clothed with figures approximating soldiers going into battle. The example reminds one of the graphic cinema of Len Lye, a New Zealander, who incidentally came to Australia in the 1930s to learn animation before moving to London. It was Lye who coined the term "direct film", and was one of the first to experiment with the technique of directly applying paint, drawing or etching on the film stock. The significant aspect of this technique as practised by Lye is that it bypassed the photographic process. For Gross, however, the photographic process is certainly not one to reject.

In this respect, if one takes a film like *Ron*, Gross has closer affinities with the works of Fernand Léger or Hans Richter. The graphic figures and shapes are surroundings of *Ron* some times take on abstract dimensions of the rather than take the film frame as a prime condition for creating effects – moving horizontally, vertically and in depth, while synchronising the movements to music.

YORAM GROSS: FILMOGRAPHY

Many of Gross' films have had title changes during production, a fact which has caused some confusion as to the exact number of features the Yoram Gross Studio has produced. For example, the *Shoreline Discovery 1987* lists *Cinderella's Secret* as a 1988 production and *The Magic Rabbit* as a 1989 production. The two are in fact the same production, which was released this year.

Published below is a complete filmography of feature films made in Australia by the Yoram Gross Studio. It seeks to clear the confusion, noting former titles and, where applicable, alternative ones.

1977

DET AND THE HARBORER

Director: Yoram Gross. **Producer:** Yoram Gross. **Associate producer:** Sandra Gross. **Screenplay:** John Palmer. **Yoram Gross:** Based on the book, *The Swirling Adventure of Det of the Harborage*, by Ethel Peckley. **Director of photography:** David Hammond. **Art director:** Graham Sharp. **Animators:** John Warner. **Editor:** Neil Hays. **Music:** John. **Composer:** Bob Young. **Lyrics:** Martin van Ameringen. **Cost Designer:** George Young. **Designs performed by:** George Young, Kevin Hobbitt, John Evans, Barbara Fleming, Kevin Gasky, Ron Higgins, Nola Mason, Spide Milligan, Jane Evans, Ian Walker. **Sound recordist:** Ian Phil Judd. **Mixers:** Maxine Whitten (male), Mike Phil Judd. **TV sales:**

Character design and storyboards: Leslie Sharpe. **Animators:** Ian Bush, Gus Ford, Peter Goodfellow, David Goodfellow, Alistair Henry, Greg Ingram, Richard Jones, Wal Logan, Peter Lundquist, Vincent Ray, Lesma Sharpe, Richard Sharples. **Costing:** Richard Melke. **Director of voices:** Mary Malpas.

Voice: Spide Milligan, Lela Brevila, Jane Evans, Barbara Fleming, Peter Grayson, Ron Hobbitt, Ron Higgins, Richard Melke, Jane Taylor.

Synopsis: Det, the little daughter of a well-known sculptor, is the central character in a colorful, humorous tale in the bush, and is rescued by a friendly kangaroo, who teaches her about his bush animals, before safely returning her home.

© Yoram Gross Film Studio.
Completed: 1977

1978

THE LITTLE HARBORER

Director: Yoram Gross. **Producer:** Yoram Gross. **Associate producer:** Sandra Gross. **Screenplay:** John Palmer. **Yoram Gross:** Based on an original story by Yoram Gross. **Lighting:** Mabel Lightner. **Director of photography:** Peter Peckley. **Art Director:** David Hammond. **Animation photographer:** Jerry Cohen, Bob Evans, Graham Sharp, Ted Norbury. **Word artist:** Judith Sheehan. **Editor:** Neil Hays. **Composer:** Bob Young. **Lyrics:** John Hays, Harry Butler. **Animators:** John Palmer, David & Hughes, Frank Kazzam. **Songs performed by:** Neil Hays. **Sound recordist:** Phil Judd. **Music:** Nopsey, David McGonaglin.

Sound editor: Neil Hays. **Music:** Phil Heywood, John McGonaglin. **TV sales:**

Animation director: Paul Melkison. **Character design:** Alistair Henry, Paul Melkison. **Storyboard:** Lesma Sharpe. **Background layout:** Arthur Vellian. **Costing:** Richard Melke. **Animators:** Alistair Henry, John Hill, Cynthia Leach, Wal Logan, Phil Melkison, Ray Newland, Vladimir Krasnopolski, Ray Wain. **Animators:** Mark Brown, Maria Brindley, Jack Ellis, Andrew D Miles, Sharon Farquhar, Wal Logan, Helen Melkison, Ray Wain, Mike Richmond. **Colour design:** Carmel Lerman. **Painters:** Murray Aarling, Christopher Cole, Ben Crute, Bob Edelman, Neil Hays, Murray Griffin, Lesma Sharpe, John Hays, Chris Lewis, Ian Mason, Bryson Wilson, Linda Price, Wendy Wain.

Voice: Sue Hinton (Det), Barry McGuire (Polly), Paul Bottoms (Billy Billy), Shane Fontaine (Jack Dorian), Harry Lawrence (Dipper), Gary Martin (Whiteywing), Anne Stubby (Angela), Brian Harrison (Big George), Paul Bottoms (Cousin Oswald Winkley), Gary Ellis (Honeycomb Lightfoot), Richard Melke (Background Little Langleys), Ronald Bell (Percy).

Cast: Neil Hays.

Synopsis: *The Swirling Adventure of Det*, the youngest member in the Harborage is destined to Australia from England, and has several adventures with a kangaroo, and a pet lamb, To-To.

© Yoram Gross Film Studio.
Completed: June 1978.

1981

ABOUT THE WORLD WITH DET

Heavenly Det and Guss Clamored The Further Adventure of Det and the Harborage

Director: Yoram Gross. **Producer:** Yoram Gross. **Associate producer:** Sandra Gross. **Screenplay:** John Palmer. **Yoram Gross:** Based on an original story by Yoram Gross. **Photography:** John Russell, Chris Ashworth. **Animation photographer:** Jerry Cohen, Bob Evans, Graham Sharp, Lesma Sharpe, Ted Norbury. **Word artist:** Judith Sheehan. **Editor:** Neil Hays. **Composer:** Bob Young. **Lyrics:** John Palmer. **Songs by:** Bruce Forsyth, Barbara Fleming, Ron Higgins. **Sound recordist:** John Hobbitt, John Peckley. **Music:** Martin George. **TV sales:**

Animation director: Ray Newland. **Storyboard and character design:** Nicholas Harding, Alistair Henry, Ray Newland. **Andrew Krasnopolski:** Layton Ray Newland. **Backgrounds:** Arthur Ellis, Alison Krasnopolski (Hobart's Laboratory), Animators: Nicholas Harding, Alistair Henry, John Hill, Cynthia Leach, Paul Mason, Chris Moore, Ray Newland, Kevin Roper, Andrew Krasnopolski, Ray Wain. **Animators:** Lynda Jones, Elizabeth Gaudin, Lynn Henson, Ted Krasnopolski, Tony Hill, Murray Jackson, J. B. Kozak, Boris Kozak, Gennady Kozak, Robert Lacey, Jonathan Ellis, Glen Lewis, Norville Noll, Stephen Parnes, Ann Russell, Victor Smith, Rudy Smith, Michael Sutton, Joanne Tams, Shane Tamsen, Bruce Wain, Flora Wain, Olga Zakhov.

Voice: Bruce Forsyth, Barbara Fleming, Ron Hobbitt, Anne Hobbitt, Ron Higgins.

Cast: Bruce Forsyth (Guss Clam).

Synopsis: The continuing adventures of Det and her search for the missing jays. Det meets with a tiger in her outside home town, the little town of Guss Clam, and takes Det on a wonderful adventure witnessing the various Christmas events around the world.

© Yoram Gross Film Studio.
Completed: May 1982

1982

HABAR

John, Sarah and the Sparrow and The Secret Rabbit

Director: Yoram Gross. **Producer:** Yoram Gross. **Associate producer:** Sandra Gross. **Screenplay:** Yoram Gross. **Yoram Gross:** Based on an original story by Yoram Gross. **Animation photographer:** Jerry Cohen. **Animators:** John Russell. **Director of photography:** Peter Peckley. **Storyboard:** (The Mai Parnes), Maisha Parnes. **Art director:** Alistair Henry. **Editor:** Christopher Flanagan. **Music:** David's Free Season. **Performed by:** Guss Clam. **Songs performed by:** Guss Clam. **Sound recordist:** John Hobbitt. **Music:** Phil Judd. **TV sales:**

Animation director: Alistair Henry. **Background layout:** Alistair Henry, Arthur Vellian. **Storyboard animators:** Alistair Henry, Cynthia Leach, Andrew

Krasnopolski, Animators: Nicholas Harding, Ray Newland, Kevin Roper. **Associate animators:** David Krasnopolski, Mary Brinkley, Maisha Brinkley, Diane Farquhar, Ben Hobbitt, Maisha Brinkley, Lesma Sharpe, Ray Wain. **Additional animation:** Lesma Sharpe, Ty Evans. **Colour design:** Susan Spence.

Voice: Jane Evans, John Evans, Ron Hobbitt, Susan Fontaine.

Cast: Jane Evans (Sarah).

Synopsis: The story of a young girl Sarah, who escapes from her western village and takes refuge in the forest, where she joins the struggle against the enemy.

© Yoram Gross Film Studio.
Completed: February 1983.

1984

DET AND THE HONEY

Director: Yoram Gross. **Producer:** Yoram Gross. **Associate producer:** Sandra Gross. **Screenplay:** John Palmer. **Yoram Gross:** Based on an original story by Yoram Gross. **Animation photographer:** Jerry Cohen, Graham Sharp. **Editor:** Christopher Flanagan. **Composer:** Bob Young. **Lyrics:** J. B. Kozak. **Animators:** John Palmer, Spide Milligan, Barbara Fleming, Ron Higgins, Rudy Moore. **Sound recordist:** Neil Hays. **Director of photography:** Peter Peckley. **Mixer:** Peter Evans. **TV sales:**

Animation director: Alistair Henry. **Animators:** Ty Evans, John Evans, Alistair Henry, Murray Griffin, Nicholas Harding, Ben Hobbitt, Alistair Henry, Lesma Sharpe, Victor Hughes, Cynthia Leach, Chris Moore, Peter van Ryl, Lesma Sharpe, Ben Hobbitt, Barbara Fleming, Andrew Krasnopolski.

Voice: Barbara Fleming, Ben Hobbitt, Anne Hobbitt, Ron Higgins, Rudy Moore.

Cast: Anne Quinn.

Synopsis: The adventures of Det in the mountains for search for the missing jays, under the nation trees and forest of the Harborage. During the course of her search she is constantly confronted by a little rabbit who is desperately trying to be recognized as a kangaroo in order to be a protected species. Det's encounter with the rabbit proves to be highly amusing.

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Completed: February 1984.

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Yoram Relyon Moore, Keith Scott.

Synopsis: But gone is Hollywood to take part in a talent contest and raise money for her sick little brother, Candy. There she meets some of the Hollywood greats and performs with them.

© Yoram Gross Film Studio
Completed June 1987.

1987

THE MAGIC RIDDLE

(Formerly Cinderella's Story)

Director: Yoram Gross. **Producer:** Yoram Gross. **Associate producer:** Sandra Gross. **Screenplay:** Yoram Gross, Bernard Lee, John Palmer. **Animation photography:** Margaret Anagnostis, Joseph Calabrese, Joseph Depledge. **Music:** Miki Nigro, Gary Page. **Music Team:** Editor Rod Hay. **Composer:** Guy Gross. **Orchestration:** Guy Gross. **Lyrics:** John Palmer. **Song by:** Rosalind Wiseman. **Relays Moore, Keith Scott, Missi Joad.** 90 mins.

Animation/directors: Justin Aspin, Sue Beck, Nabuko Benfield, Nicholas Harding, Alvin Henry, Ray Newland, Ray Newland. **Background layout:** Richard Salovei. **Animators:** Justin Aspin, Sue Beck, Nabuko Benfield, Patrick Burns, Jan Davis, Alan Evans, Massimo Giannini, Nicholas Harding, Alvin Henry, Victor Johnson, Ray Newland, Derek Pivarski, Sheila Pineda, Stanley Wilder. **Assistant animators:** Tim Aldrich, Michael Bann, Ben Bann, Jani Bann, Michael Bann, Paul Chung, Mark Coleman, Andrew Collins, Stephen Collins, Yvonne Davis, Graham Derwent, Michael Dunn, Michelle Garton, Debbie Kirkham, Kristine Kunkin, Alexander Lavella, Max Minto,

Rachel O'Rourke, Philip Peters, Bing Phing, Robert Qiu Yuen, Joseph Su, Greg Summers, Jack Spink, Andrew Stiles, Amanda Thompson, Elizabeth Velezquez, Ian Wilson, James Wylie, Si Kang Lin, Loree Yu, Sheng Zhang. **Layouts:** Bob Black, Greg Harding, Nicholas Harding, Glen Lovell, Paul Mahalan, Alan Mahalan, David Skinner, Robert Smith, Andrew Summers, Antonina Sushkova. **Cynthia Lewis.** **Colour styling:** Jonathan Toms. **Camera operator:** Margaret Anagnostis, Joseph Calabrese, Joseph Depledge, Miki Nigro, Gary Page, Wayne Toms. **Background painter:** Milton Barker. **Post Comp:** Andrew Hill, Beverly Hillman, John Smith, Oliver Qiu Yuen, Ken Right, Richard Salovei. **Revolution & Eye cut:** In. **Jack Armstrong, Angela Butler, Helen Connolly, Peggy Davis, Basil Laidlaw, Janet Robinson, Jonathan Toms, Dean Wu, Li Ping Yi, Sheng Zhang.** **Collapsing supervisor:** Relays Moore. **Ross Charles, Daria Dary, Amy Gross, Karen Gross, Michelle Hare, Lisa Hughes.** **Collapsing:** Mary Anne James, Stefan Kater, Rebecca Mies, Robert Munday, Rebecca Price, Rebecca Saline, Michael Reid, Maria Salovei, Sheng Smith, Jan Smith, Vicki Summers, Michelle Walker, Sally Wu, Hong Wang. **Cell tracing supervisor:** Catherine O'Connor. **Alan Barker, Jennifer Garcia, Stephen Murray, Christine Seddick, Lorraine Wells.** **Post-production supervisor:** Rod Hay. **Script editors:** Lucy Deanevaldi, Mark Lewis. **Director's assistant:** Dennis Fordham. **Production assistant:** Laura Cohen. **Production assistants:** Anthony Jaki, Barbara Lee, Sarah McDougall. **Producer's assistant:** Jane Barrett. **Technical supervisor:** James Anagnostis. **Assistant to Guy Gross:** Cathie Lovell. **Dialogue editor:** Rod Hay. **Additional dialogue:** Rod Hay. **Sound effects editor:** Nicki Bolter, Lee Robbins, Tim Ryan. **Music editor:** Greg Hill. **Assistant editors:** Ruth Oswald, Barbara Kemp, Joanne Smith. **Sound mixer:** Phil Judd.

Music: Magister Angus Robertson. **Music engineers:** Susan Gaudley, Tim Ryan, Kiri Gaudley, James Gaudley. **Mixing studio:** SoundFire. **Production studio:** Spectrum. **Music studios:** Trunkies, Palm Studios, GGH Studios. **Laboratory:** Alibi Studios. **Lab team:** Dennis Waldman. **Negative making:** Miriam Gordon. **Grading:** Arden Cardigan. **Grading:** European Art. **Marketing coordinator:** Tim Brooks Hunt. **Financial advisor:** Peter Dunn. **Legal advisor:** Martin Cooper. **Completion guarantee:** Film Finance, January 1988.

Yoram Relyon Moore, Keith Scott.

Synopsis: A princess of Italy takes from the Brothers Grimm, Hans Christian Andersen and many more fantastic stories, weaves together into a story full of magic, mystery and myth. Featuring Cinderella, Little Red Riding Hood, Pinocchio, the Three Little Pigs and many more.

© Yoram Gross Film Studio
Completed 1991.

IN PRODUCTION

SHINY BOY

Director: Yoram Gross. **Producer:** Yoram Gross. **Executive producer:** Sandra Gross. **Screenplay:** Yoram Gross, John Palmer, Leonard Lee. **Based on the novel:** The Adventures of Shiny Boy by Dorothy Hill. **Animation photography:** Margaret Anagnostis (and others not yet finished), 88 mins approx.

Animation directors: Richard Beck, Alvin Henry, Justin Aspin (and others not yet finished), Storyboard: Richard Beck (and others not yet finished).

Yoram Relyon Moore, Keith Scott.

Synopsis: The film tells the story of Shiny Boy's childhood with his friends in the bush. The peace and charm of their existence is shattered by the dis-

struction and clearing of their home by loggers. And Shiny Boy's little friends end, in a series of exciting adventures, the bush animals win the struggle to preserve their existence.

© Yoram Gross Film Studio
Expected release 1993.

NOT IN PROGRESS

Producer: Yoram Gross. **Director:** Yoram Gross. **Associate producer:** Sandra Gross. **Screenplay:** John Palmer.

Yoram Relyon Moore, Keith Scott.

Synopsis: But Shiny Boy may win an American partnership which leads him on a war-torn planet of Remains and Squares.

© Yoram Gross Film Studio
(No further details at this stage.)

OTHER

1987

HAPPY BLADES

(upstart half hour television programme)

Director: Yoram Gross. **Producer:** Yoram Gross. **Assistant producer:** Sandra Gross. **Screenplay:** John Palmer. **Animation photography:** Joseph Calabrese, Graham Murray, Robert Stephen Hayes. **Sound editor:** Rod Hay. **Composer:** Guy Gross. **Music performed by:** Guy Gross. 30 mins.

Animation director: Ray Newland. **Background layout:** James Calabrese, Andrew Ellis, Kennedy Keeler.

Yoram Relyon Moore, Keith Scott.

Synopsis: Santa and Mrs Claus receive a gift for Christmas a walking, talking Reindeer called Candy Cane.

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Completed 1987.

THEMA AUSTRALASIA

(Movie feature film project which was never started)



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Tokyo International Film Festival

SANDRA HALL REPORTS

TO the indignation of some, the list of award winners in the main Competition at the Tokyo International Film Festival turned out to be a triumph of political correctness. There were no arguments about the winner of the big prize, the Tokyo Grand Prix, John Hughes' *City of Hope* was an eminently popular choice, rightly seen as an impressive work from a Hollywood independent. Rather, the consensus of discontent was heard in relation to the perfect geopolitical balance achieved by the rest of the list.

The Special Jury Prize was split between Tamasu and Chino, the Best Actor was Renzo, the Best Actress, Chinese film *Parker* was the Best Director Award while *The Grasshopper*, the most commercial of all the entries, the home team

took the prize for Best Screenplay (Shinji Otsuka's *Shenmue*), a satirical piece set in the 1950s, won for its technically picture-perfect photography of one of the most beautiful parts of rural Japan, and the prize for Best Screenplay went to a U.S. Japanese co-production, a strange hybrid called *Jen Mien*. This one transported the Red Room story to an ironworks town near Pittsburgh, and changed the account of the original into an insensitive Japanese tycoon who has bought up the town and plans to turn it into a film park. One of Jen Mien's executive producers is Edward R. Pressman, who also served as Chairman of the Festival's second competitive event, the Young Cinema Awards. Pressman's company recently signed a production deal with the Japanese ASCH Picture Corporation.

This Tokyo Festival is trying very hard to build its reputation of becoming "The Cannes of the East." Under the direction of a vigorous new manager, the film, television and publishing mogul, Tetsuya Takama, it has decided to switch from being a biennial to a yearly event, and this year's budget of 18 million indicates that the Japanese are not at all discouraged by the huge amounts of money they have lost in the past four years as a result of their Hollywood acquisitions and investments.

Moreover, Japan's status as Hollywood's largest foreign market makes the Tokyo Festival an event of particular interest to the U.S. majors, while the rest of the world's film-making community should be eager to enlarge their share of Japan's expanding market for anime, manga, video and direct broadcast

satellite television.

The Sydney-based company, Pacific Film, is opening a Tokyo office to meet its Australian films on Japanese air chief, Chieko Hamada, vice at the Festival, to gather with the Australian Film Commission's Peter Sammarby and representative of the Film Finance Corporation and Beyond International. Four Australian films were screened. Jocelyn Moorhead's *Proof* won one of three Bronze Awards (worth 5 million yen or \$47,000) under Young Cinema Competition. Paul Cox's *A Woman's Tale* was in the International Section, Leo Fleider's *Holiday on the River* was one of six films selected from Cannes' Un Certain Regard section and brought in Tokyo, and Sabine Hosen's *Apart* was shown as part of Women's Film Week.

Although the Festival plans to set up a market in Cannes, its financial role so far is more a matter of retail than distribution. This year, industry executives went to see and be seen at the heavily catered reception held almost every evening at the city's grandest hotel. Film festival, meanwhile, made its appearance in a cinema, before the competition as plot as vibrant scenes through the main events and debates, sampling a broad cross-section of world cinema.

A fair proportion of the filmmakers at the main competition were well established names and, along with *Shogun*, Cox and Parker, Walker's *Sold* caught the eye with his latest film, a German-French-U.S.-Greek co-production called *Memo*



Peter (Peyser), adapted from the novel by Swiss writer Max Frisch.

Ran Shegach plays an American expatriate restlessly moving around the world in a dedicated attempt to escape commitment of any kind. He is in and flight when his past catches up with him, whereupon consciousness multiplies, less power inevitable and the air becomes heavy with the shaping threat of self-indulgence. Although a much shorter and more disciplined work, Peyser made an instructive companion-piece to *Wine* Wenders' *Until the End of the World*, which was shown on the closing night of the Festival.

Both filmmakers have travelled far from home since the heyday of the New German Cinema in the 1970s, with venerable roots. *Until the End of the World*, for example, is a long way from the moody

influence of Wenders' *In Land der Besten* (King of the Road). Stratched out to three hours plus, its subliminal of styles and confusion of themes makes it seem like six films, none of them any good. It has the same film noir to science fiction to fantasy and farce, with a luscious burst of existential angst as the plot shifts rapidly from Nice to Paris to San Francisco to Tokyo, floundering up in the American south where a metaphysical visit (Solwing Existentialism, William Hurt, Sam Nork, Jeanne Moreau, Max von Sydow, James Drago, David Gulpiti, Justice Saunders) struggles to convey the theme that the script (co-written by the novelist, Peter Carey) is nothing more.

Among the Asian films in the main competition, the most eagerly anticipated was Robert Yang's *A Brighter Summer Day*, co-winner of the Jury Prize. Using a broad canvas and the kind of long take takes more a few associated with his fellow star of the Taiwanese New Wave, Shin Shiao-hsun (Tungsten Whistle) [The Time to Live and the Time to Die], Beijing through [A City of No Stars], Yang draws on his adolescence in Taipei in the 1960s to tell a story of real gangs of adolescents, the sons and daughters of Chinese under leading frustrated, unsettled lives in a city aware of its own identity and dominated by fear of an masked neighbor.



YANG'S FIRST INTERNATIONAL FILM WAS THREE HOURS AND NINE MINUTES LONGER AND MORE CHALLENGING. ABOVE AND TO RIGHT: A SCENARIOWRITER, DIRECTOR AND ACTRESS COLLABORING IN THE TAIWANESE SUMMER DAYS FOR ONE OF THE SEVERAL

Tell that to the Japanese who, statistically at least, seem to prefer the macho film. The film was not with the lightning film, Yoji Yamada's *My Seta*, which covered ground familiar to fans of Ozu's *Mother's Garden* (The Daily Sun, 1938), with its story of the family of an elderly widower forced to consider a move from the house and farm where he has spent most of his life.

The widower lives in the city and he visits home, expecting to make his home with the older, ailing executive. But Takaya proves to be hard, cramped and alienating, and the audience is treated to an occasionally poignant observation on the difficulties of trying to establish a sense of homeliness in the course of making a living there.

The film's poetic pleasures of slow gaze by wide again confirmed in the gloriously magnificent *Shimazutsumi*. Set in the Shikoku region, beside a river described as being "Japan's last clear stream", the film is both a childhood memoir and a study in a vanished way of life. As slow moving but graceful pace, as director Hidetsugu Ueda, one of the vibrantest of Japanese aesthetes, treats the day-to-day routines of the children of a roadside dinerkeeper as the family explores typhoons, flood and economic hardship in order to get on, enjoying the tranquil and idyllic moments between, and, in the film's gradual accumulation of poetic images, it achieves a powerfully hypnotic sense of time and place.

Similarly nostalgic sentiments were expressed in Argentina's candidate in the Young Cinema Competition, Miguel Pereira's *Los Últimos Días* (The Last Days

West, which was a Venice Award winner. Reflective scenes tend to time and structure. This one gives father against son and explores entirely alien of generation and limited present themes as the traditionals take on the new generation of economic means plus on the plains.

Sergio Ray's new film, *Agosto* (The Stranger), was another work at pains of traditional values but turned out to be disappointingly ineffectual. A comedy of manners centring on a comfortably middle class Caligula family receiving an unexpected that from an uncle remembered only faintly from childhood, it has a creatively unadorned moral message and two second Ray's characteristically demurely style signs mostly laboured and verbose.

A much more rigorous and open view of family life came from the Chinese director, Huang Jianzhong. His *The Spring Festival*, a co-production from the Beijing Film Studio and Hong Kong's Wanda Film and TV Co., is being hailed as a responsibly burning on the "changes brought forth to Chinese families by the introduction of commodity economy".

With no great hope of enjoying these when members of a large family come together to celebrate the lunar New Year. There are new guests and hence to be introduced, old tends to be discarded and debate financial matters is in order, but everybody's worst expectations are soon realized. There are fights over who, money and status and while the most efficient and Westernized characters in the story are also the oldest, this gets that they bring have a devastating effect on family relations. The ending is both ideologically correct and profoundly pessimistic.

Instilling contrast with their view of the benefits of the market economy, the Festival staff is all opinion. Its organizers were determined to do straight and do it big, and of Japan's recent admission to Hollywood are day indication, so no game will be spared.

FESTIVAL AWARD WINNERS

INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

GOLDEN GRAND PRIX

City of Hope

(U.S., John Hughes)

BEST DIRECTOR

Alan Parker

(*The Commitments*, Ireland)

BEST ACTRESS

Yin Li Ling

(*The Spring Festival*, China)

BEST ACTOR

Q. Mingyang/Li Xinyu

(*Hot Time Here! Get Them Out*, Shanghai Animation, USSR)

BEST SCREENPLAY

Tom Moravetz

(*Love Me*, Hiroshi Tsukada, U.S./Japan)

JURY PRIZES

A Shepherd Swears Day

(Edward Yang, Taiwan)

The Spring Festival

(Huang Jianzhong)

ARTISTIC CONTRIBUTION

Shimazutsumi

(Hideo Ueda, Japan)

YOUNG CINEMA

2000

GOLD PRIZE

Delicatessen

(Jean-Pierre Jeunet, Marc Caro, France)

SILVER PRIZE

Five Girls and a Boy

(Rob Hung Wan, Hong Kong)

BRONZE PRIZES

La Ultima Noche (The Last Night,

Miguel Pereira, Argentina),

Himmel über Berlin (Heaven is Fall,

Wolfgang Pichler, Germany),

Proof

(Jacqueline Mastroratti, Australia)

SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Sergio Ray



DIARY FOR MY LOVES

Adrian Martin

On the subject of 'reel pleasures', I tend to agree with the French critic Gerard Legrand, who suggested in 1953 that there is something rather delicate and difficult about revealing one's list of 'encounters', as if one were a sexual fetishist suddenly caught in a spotlight, hopefully having to retortative to a vast, uncomprehending and merciless audience the inscrutable logic of one's private, sexual obsessions.

Who can say, really, why they love a particular something or somebody? Such 'object choices' formulate themselves in the course of a long and twisted personal history, a history of passions, accidents, palinodes, allegiances, revelations, surrenders. In short, I believe that films are never 'great' in themselves; they are only made great by virtue of what people personally craved in them.

I feel more and more that critics who try to establish 'objective' standards of evaluation — the kind who endlessly debate which movies are the 'classics' and the 'masterpieces', the 'over-rated' and the 'under-rated' — are simply elaborating an extraordinary cover for their own naked desire for particular films, film experiences and filmmakers. (In this, my tone and approach may differ somewhat from that of the previous contributor to this column.)

So, my selection has almost everything to do with subjective love, desire and madness, and almost nothing to do with so-called 'critical objectivity'.

THE LIST

1

JOHN CARRAWAY: I discovered Carraraw's 'film' — a very mid-bean film — and no experience of cinema before or since has even approached the profundity and force of the revelation. For me there are almost no words that can be spoken even in the most deferential and intimate hour-long about this magical suite simply I believe (with Thelma Houston) that "it is through him that life entered the cinema".

LOVE STREAMS (1971)

GLOWA (1980)

OPENING MOUNT (1970)

2

ROBERT BRESSON: It is through Bresson that many enterprises discover — in a totally left, physical way — the purity of cinematic form. Virtually all his films have that unique, chilled Bretonian perfection, but three have also spoken to me — for the uttering truthfulness of their themes, and the deep emotional effects they engender.

AN HUSBAND, A BATHMAN (1960)

L'AMANT (1966)

3

CONRAD ROBBINS: The most of actors pass one of the Cinema on shelves of the 1950s (plus all those later rediscovered) they left little possibility for the proper appreciation of another kind of filmmaker: the kind whose art was concentrated in the script, the performances and theatrical staging rather than camera gymnastics or kinetic montage. Leo McCarey and Russian (Bresson) are, however, far more than just film themselves to me, their stories of love, community, society, and the painful getting of wisdom about oneself and others are as profound as they are vital.

THE AFFAIR, TRUTH (McCarey 1957)

ALL THE CONQUERING MERE (Bresson 1946)

THE MIRACLE OF MORGAN'S CREEK

(Bresson 1946)

THE LAST EVE (Bresson 1948)

4

MALE MELANCHOLY: Films of male melancholy, based around the subjectivities of men entirely repressed, paralyzed, impotent, distant, somnolent, mournful or ingenuously, ineffectually violent. Have a special importance and poetry for me. It is, of the cinema, so often pegged as





a patriarchal apparatus designed to foster glory and assure the male viewer (and one who's reminiscent with dignity up to last desecrating (with infidelity, heartrending accuracy) the benevolent) in that very apparatus.

ONCE UPON A TIME IN AMERICA (Sergio Leone, 1984)

TWO LONE BLACKTOPS (Mervyn Frumkin, 1971)

LA MAMAN ET LA PUTAIN (Jean Seberg, 1972)

BACINE RAIL (Martin Scorsese, 1985)

5

LIVE AND DEATH: This is a broad category but necessarily so (perfect just about my entire life could go under this heading). I am a sucker for films that embody mixed encounters, midlife crises, fragile relationships, sexual desires, fleeting epiphanies, secret sorrows, quaking personal revelations, and the same persons I might call mine. I am a romantic. This grouping con-

tains monuments of cinema, a few personal favorites, and even an especially bad Shirley Temple movie.

L'ETALANTE (Jean Reno, 1988, unranked version, 1990)

LETTERS FROM AN UNKNOWN WOMAN (John Dahl, 1988)

LA DAME VERT (The Green Ray) (Jean Seberg, 1972)

Big Fish (1998)

PERCEC (HETTER) (Henry Hathaway, 1944)

ANGEL FACE (Clay Prentiss, 1952)

UNE FANTOME DE CAMPAGNE (Jean Reno, 1998)

HIMMEL UND ERDE (Fritz Lang, 1930)

Wendy (1971)

A WALK WITH LOVE AND DEATH (John Huston, 1951)

EN PASSION (A. Fassin, Agnès Varda, 1970)

STROMBOLI (Roberto Rossellini, 1950)

NOW AND FOREVER (Henry Hathaway, 1946)

6

EMPTY LUNATIC: To discover Lubitsch is to discover the power and poignancy of what has been called the indirect art of much popular mainstream cinema. For underneath all the tomfoolery, the cliché, the stereotypes (the obligatory happy endings and sanctioned conservative values in Lubitsch) there are other feelings and ideas, not only withering irony, but not inordinately long.

MOUSSE IN PARADISE (1950)

DEMIEN FOR LIVING (1930)

HERREN DER WILDT (1941)

7

GAGGLES: Gagology is the reverse side of the profound Comedy coin, whose latter is deep and fragile, the former is shallowly. Merely superficial, knockabout, cardboard. The gag is one of cinema's (I avoid all films extending beyond one silent comedy era) (Monty, Chaplin, Lloyd, Laurel and Hardy) through to Tashline and Lewis, Carbone, Blake/Downs and Philippe de Broca, and the most exasperating practitioners of exploitation (including the Russ Meyer and Sam Peckinpah).

KEVIN KAGGLES (Rita Kagan, 1990)

ANTHONY AND MIDDLE (Frank Tashline, 1930)

THE LADDER MAN (Sam Lewis, 1910)

ROCK A BITE BITE (Tashline, 1930)

RED HOT RISING RAIN (Tashline, 1940)

CROW HOLE (Crow, 1930)

SUPERHEROES (John Meyer, 1970)

LE HOMME DE BEE (The Man From Bee, Philippe de Broca, 1971)

JACQUE PACE (John Cassavetes, Henry (1971) KAGGLES)

WILLIE PACE (KAGGLES) and **WILLIE PACE** (1971)

SAVING THE SPENDING MONEY

SAVING THE SPENDING MONEY (John Cassavetes, 1971)

IN AN UNLACKING MANNER

SAVING THE SPENDING MONEY (1971) (1971) (1971)

SAVING THE SPENDING MONEY (1971) (1971) (1971)

SAVING THE SPENDING MONEY (1971) (1971) (1971)

SAVING THE SPENDING MONEY (1971) (1971) (1971)



8

ORSON WELLES: Welles is the supreme and eternal embodiment of cinematic modernism. Everything about both his films and his agenda—the unbridled wit, the witless, relentless formal experimentation, the non-caring professional malpractice—attests to his troubling, agonistic greatness. There can be no one like his masterpiece. I have simply picked my favorites from four successive decades.

F FOR FARE (1973)

THE TRIAL (1962)

TOUCH OF EVIL (1958)

THE MAGNIFICENT AMBERSONS (1926)

9

EXPERIMENTAL/NARRATIVE: A more selection of the supposedly difficult films which have almost provoked and excited me more than occasionally since I read *Modernist Movies* over 40 years ago.

LAST CHANTS FOR A SLOW DANCE (Jan./Feb. 1977)

JE TU S'ELLE (General Cinema, 1974)

ONLINE ET JULIE MONT EN BAISSE (Jacques Rivette, 1974)

IN THIS LIFE'S BOOT (Artist and Dorena Cinema, 1984)

THE SCENE BEGINS (Scene Progression, 1975)

PLAYING (Jacques Tati, 1967)

SPENDING (Peter King, Mimeo Cinema, 1976)

NUMBER (John C. Romano, 1982)

INHA SONG (Pierrepaul Cinema, 1976)

SEE SPARKS ON PLANOIR (The Children in the Openness March-June 1977)

10

WALTON BRIDGE: Capital is the most polemical (and the most hypocritical) of all film-makers' skills as it is the one level in the whole field of a cultural movement can appropriate its contradictions almost immediately. But his practice—as "the director who re-invents cinema for us every four years," as George Dancy once put it—is still one of the most inspiring games in town.

DOOT AND BARD (Jan./Feb. Artist March Cinema, 1975)

PARISON (1982)

NUMERO QUIN (1974)

TOOT IN BURN (Jan./Feb. Jean Pierre Cinema, 1972)

BARD E PARTIE (1984)

11

AROUND AS MINUTE: Possibly the ugliest word in the entire world of the cinema business is "shorts." It is so deeply ingrained into so many people that the very deliberational term is taken long after that some of the medium's greatest achievements almost always go unrecognized. The following are the perfectly formed, sparkling, sparkling films—maybe even masterpieces. Most are between 10 and twenty minutes long.

AMOR (Pierpa Cinema, 1977)

LA TERRA NOSTRA DALLA LUNA (The Earth from the Moon, 1974)

FROM THE MOUNTAIN TO THE MOUNTAIN (The Mountain, Pier Paolo Pasolini, 1980)

MOMENT (Stephen Decker, 1988)

WILD NIGHT IN THE MOUNTAIN (George Kuchar, 1975)

MURDER PLAIN (Alan Brinkley, 1984)

GAME DU NOIR (Episode of Paris, 1974) — Jean Rouch, 1980

CITIZEN, MADE (John Thompson, 1974)

12

MUSIC: Even when they are not explicitly religious people most cineastes hold one of the highest places in their pantheon for their preferred mastery—choosing from an ever-expanding of options, especially in experimental directors. Dennis Cox, Dwyer, Harvey, Rosellini. Although for the first part, I have not said what his films are reflecting to, my sympathy is George Dancy. The other major titles here are, in various voluntary and involuntary ways, under the sign of surrealism and a minimalist, although which like the film of the present in the first in the end never calls it back down.

NUAN GOUTRE (The Office of Progression)

George Dancy, 1980

HELLO DE JOUR (John Rouch, 1980)

MADE (Pierpa and Pierre Cinema, 1980)

EREMUS (John Rouch, 1980)

THE HEART OF THE HUNTER (Charles Laughton, 1980)

13

REAL, REAL: This is how to Welles, except aged, incomplete, impoverished and his masterpiece. Plus the legends of surrealism, magic realism, hyperreal, documentary and French post-re-



alism of the 1930s and 40s all mingled myself and put into today's overdrive. A geological Welles?

LA VIE DE MON PÈRE (City of Paris, 1980)

LES TROIS COLOMBES DU MAÎTRE (The

Three Columns of the Master, 1980)

MAISON ET LA VIE DES HOMMES (Maison et la Vie des Hommes, three part television series, 1980)

14

LEGACY: Teaching cinema has always been an idealism for me. I made it a personal rule for many years to look only films I had never seen. Once, wandering fairly blind into a corner of cinema history after the day of the coming of sound, I discovered what I still regard as the unsurpassably richest, most fertile mid-century period in the medium—roughly between the mid 40s and the mid 50s.

THE CHEAT (Carl H. De Mille, 1948)

FOURTH WIVES (John von Strömberg, 1949)

PEAKS (Paul Henreid, 1950)

THE SHARPEST INSTRUMENT (John Henreid, 1950)

EMERSON VS MR. BENDIS (Wesley Hill, 1950)

TABU (W. H. Mason, Robert Flaherty, 1950)

SIXTH HOURS (Frank Capra, 1950)

15

CLASSIC CINEMA: If there is any truth in Paul Williamson's assertion that the "history of cinema per se" is "the look of a particular kind of narrative cinema made in Hollywood in the 40s and 50s" or between "Pearl Harbor and the Bay of Pigs," here is the list to prove it. It is pretty much (except for Michael Powell) the classic cinematic inventory of late-World War II American cinema directors (minus John Ford). And the only plenty of other films by the same directors which shadow his selection. All that Heaven Allowed, London or A Double Johnny Carter, Only Angels Have Wings, The Power Without, Shock Corridor, I Walked With a Zombie, The Longshoremen.



THE GOOD WOMAN OF BANGKOK; LE MARI
DE LA COIFFEUSE (THE HAIRCRESSER'S HUSBAND);
HOLIDAYS ON THE RIVER YARRA; MISTER JOHNSON;
PROSPERO'S BOOKS; AND, A WOMAN'S TALE



ABOVE: AUL (THE GOOD WOMAN OF BANGKOK) SHOWN BY DENNIS O'ROURKE AS THE CHARACTER OF THE GOOD WOMAN OF BANGKOK

THE GOOD WOMAN OF BANGKOK

GREG KERR

No matter how hard they try to present reality, all documentaries are, to an extent, embellished by the personality and views of their makers. The *Good Woman of Bangkok* is no exception: its director, Dennis O'Rourke, of his latest subject, a 35-year-old Thai prostitute.

The film is a voyeuristic, confined and subjective look at the life of one woman in Bangkok's red light district. It is bleak, shocking and, at times, bright, mild at all. It is a fascinating exercise in storytelling.

The interviews of O'Rourke are listed at the beginning of the film.

A director whose marriage has come to an end and a year in Bangkok where she has experienced violence and love without pain, a meeting in a bar with a woman called Aul.

Although it is never actually stated, it becomes clear that Aul is the central figure of O'Rourke's camera, as well as his sexual companion. In making a film about the woman, he has paid far less. The director has watched the boundaries of the interviewee-interviewer relationship.

During a recent interview (see *Screen Papers* August 1991, pp 1-10), O'Rourke said he remained unsure of the meaning of this documentary, undoubtedly his most personal to date.

Some things became clear, though, as he works his way through the emotional entanglement of his own relationship with Aul. It is more than just an ordinary look at prostitution, beneath O'Rourke's carefully measured narration, the viewer can sense the intensity of a director beset by his own sexual divisions and guilt. It is this conflict—and O'Rourke is doing to harness it—that gives *The Good Woman of Bangkok* an energy found in few other documentaries.

Some may find the premise of *À Rouelle* a little off-putting on moral and ethical grounds. In it, after all, one of three teenage girls goes to a city where girls and youngsters are enslaved to prostitution by force. It is not necessary, after all, more, but in making a film about it first, at the end of *Rouelle*, offering to bury Anne's soulless on the conditions that she no longer pain her body. It is a film for a new time, a new dawn.

One assumes ID Roarks was motivated at least partly by altruistic concerns here, though one wonders how far he might have gone with his subject had she not been promised money (and education).

To his credit, *O'Rourke* never tries to disguise his motives; perhaps it is taught a person like him to do that. He watches the camera feed like prey at street-side bars, he films his own sex shows, and he lets the tape roll on scenes in which the hotel room staff subject themselves to his lecherous stare. In brief, as a mirror, he is both witness and participant in the act.

© Peter is viewed in regard to one of his accidents during the interview but, as no stages does one see him, except for an early scene when his reflection is captured by the television mirror at a table turn, as if to underline that what is to follow is very much his own point of view. Here is the director's physical presence to glorify his every frame. His camera goes direct, indeed to the oblique, through a window of his light stage. Thereafter, the rapid dance music and the go-go girls who wear numbers on their skirts so as to allow easy identification by clients, he reveals the rapidly changing pace of the watering hole. Their beauty and sensuality, and the camaraderie they all wish attributed to each other, are

The women in *D-Flourish* II may know only their world, their place in it and their fate. One recalls a scene where a bar girl complains to another backstage (Pat) Pat (acted) had been in it. Her call register (happy) only. "We'll all be there," says Pat.

In another parental and disturbing scene, O'Rourke bases his career on a young girl outside a club. The girl, a playmate of angel-faced legs for adults when he she begins to amuse babies.

in this and indeed the documentary does a parallel with the Brexit play. The Good Person of Zenith— a story © Maurice Maeterlinck on "the most terrible about the impossibility of being good in an evil world." And © Maurice Maeterlinck is exposed for all her hopes, her hope, wisdom and self-loathing. "I have to close my eyes so I can hope and do it for nothing," she says in one scene.

Now it is explained why bottled into press human personality because of the betrayal of his own art for life (his motherhood) and a series of his names, who gambled and drank away the main supply of his family. Her story is a compelling, subtle and together for every Thackeray, and the way O'Rourke extracts her story is a little bit seductive in itself.

Index previously. Of Rostow's virtues two are original/journalistic cards: one that demands a subject for growth the opportunity to tell this or the other without the subject's/individual's etc.

regulations of the interview. The other, that the subject should not be preyed upon during moments of grief and vulnerability.

For a lot of part of the documentary, Aulwaka talks mostly in Thai, sometimes in broken English – it's obviously speeded out from drugs, stress, exhaustion or both. There is nothing discreet about O'Rourke's style of interviewing. First, he has a method of filming. As you enter the camera point over Aulwaka – her behind, as indicated by a towel – as she tries to sleep, she is also seen as adjusting her glass eye. On another occasion, the camera lingers obliquely on a white, egg-shaped object. She looks up at the object: "I'm eating now, it's nothing to do with your Mr. T." It is interesting that O'Rourke chooses not to see this as the cutting-edge film, because it reveals unashamedly and perhaps potentially, his participants feel equally about their life, as they experience and document the subject.

Foodora is also included at Ace's aunt's ongoing suspensions of the chemical's sensitivity to not making those naked pictures in her DM, also linked from within.

◊ Bourne's technique, though, suggests nothing other than a film that is made of frozen frames. Technically, the documentary follows a conventional structure aside from the use of some slow motion scenes, and effective interest editing involving the subject of The car who are sold into slavery.

The *Great War* and Bangkok's *Chinatown* is a night documentary, doesn't even set out to answer any questions. Rather than deal with the why and wherefore of prostitution, *Chinatown* seems to be telling its audience, "This is as I see it." The credits describe the program as a "documentary feature film." Its regional and ethnic aspects are borne out: the director is a Singaporean living with his top subject, and his audience are

All others (the words and images are so garbled as they are felt) but it is worth noting that virtually all the interviewees from the four bars visiting the bars to see a movie, appear to be under the influence of alcohol or a narcotic. One thus may argue that O'Regan has presented a distorted view of reality but it is a beautiful story to tell.

Some of the material surviving Aot is a little repetitive and hyperbolized by inserting questions. There are a few times when it is downright heart-rending: "What I love I don't know. I want love but I know not. What not good? No people can love me." Aot says tearfully at the very beginning downstage how he feels again: "A woman has said to me her good has all to know, and for a moment, all seems glorious seems impossible." *Quitting the Stage*

□ Floorers use several devices to amplify the chant. At one by Marie Janet Hibel is used at several junctures as a strong counterpoint to the principal discourse of prohibition in a quieter register. And page some money as their she can release a group of my birds from a cage (placing the birds a sign tells us, will bring prosperity and good luck). The scene is one filled with the symbols and phoronyms of O'Rourke's work. The image of a woman in the house, while a real and a real life, is a symbol of the house, while a real and a real life, is a symbol of the house, while a real and a real life, is a symbol of the house.

stands as a perfect symbol in itself, yet it is diluted by superimposing the scene with a recorded monologue in which All states the one wants to be a good horse! It needlessly trying to accentuate mood the director seems to have overlooked the axiom that a good picture can tell a thousand words.

The *Girl Woman* of Memphis is filmed over nine months, using the Regal Hotel as a base. Some of the footage was captured on video (and later to be transferred onto film) which presumably allowed O'Rourke more freedom to move and shoot in low light conditions. It certainly materialised that could have only been recorded a distance away in a darkened room, a video camera in the wrong place after missing a shot or two there. Just how O'Rourke managed to put together the picture is a credit to his persistence and his ability to achieve his objectives at all heights. It appears odd, though, that for all of the project's careful handling, it does not actually show Ray up centre stage, *virtually*

The Good Woman of Bangkok is the sort of film that moves and stays with you. Aoi is the radiant "girl" of the picture and an abiding strength. She is often skeptical at Q's remarks, his claims, and his nice farm offer, but she remains moved and steady throughout.

In the telling of *Ace* is story (the documentary shorts, the evolution of a unique personal bond between author and subject) a bond that may never have existed without O'Rourke's effort of a non-earn. *Ace* was used and abused by O'Rourke, and she knew it. But as a little side of other, it

THE GOOD WOMEN OF BANGKOK. Directed by Benita O'Rourke. Producer: Dennis O'Rourke. Associate producer: Glynnis Rowe. Scriptwriter: Dennis O'Rourke. Director of photography: Benita O'Rourke. Sound recordist: Gwynn O'Rourke. Editor: Tim O'Rourke. Cost: Virginia Chelvanathan. (M) Rite. (Black and white) Price: 25 cine 65 video. Available: 1991.

LE MARI DE LA COIFFEUSE
(THE HAIRDRESSER'S HUSBAND)

Abstract

Political economy's fascination with the relationship between debt, capitalization and the pursuit of happiness was vividly evident last week in *New York*. This interest is again the basis of the latest in the *Confessions* (in this case, *Confessions of a Husband*) is a novel, masquerading with a deeply elegant understatement. There is, however, an analogy between the two fables: for example, both deal with a man's struggle against a not-so-obvious object of desire—both explore relationships a bit and in a sense, introduce one to the other's stage. But one cannot mix with the deepest fears and anxieties which breathe the political, psychological and emotional life of the characters in most stories.

The film explores the growth of an arrogant, man with ample-bosomed Frenchness and warlike-typed moustache. At the start Ardene (Prissy Hoeking), a Native girl will try to glimpse dancing, or rather attempting to dance, in the relative terms of an Arabian moon.

Enochism we use the same encephalogram that will be important throughout the film. The film develops a tension on the local headmaster, who happens to possess the prophecies of a Palestinian earth mother — indeed, a number of aspects where the link between such women and encephalogram is highlighted recall Follini's *American*; for example, this tension remains with him even after his death (impossible for him to see the headmaster [Mendelsohn] to say, he is a regular doctor to patients and has had his entire yellowy-stored throughout the film.) Later in the *American* (John Rochester) finds another headmaster, Melville (Anna Galina), to whom he proposes she marry. The explosion of their joyful relationship begins.

Lacoste has worked with both John Rochester and Anna Galina before. Their partnerships provide the very center of the film. Rochester's Antoine has a childlike quality that is quite compatible with one of performance, an awkwardness that makes him no stony philistine and a really good way to finally understand, though one feels that he has had too much hardship, as well. Galina's attitude is an experienced woman with a light touch. Her story of independence. Of course, her life with Antoine is a radical change. This context is crucial.

Moreover, Lacoste employs experienced theatre actors. In lesser roles and those are among the major delights of the film: the generous agent of Agopian (Marcelle Chirac) and later, his descending insight into old age, Julien (Bouvier), a melancholic violinist, the pitiful priest and the concerned couple. What their often brief appearances suggest. In fact, it is the recurrent encephalogram by the external world upon the happiness of Antoine and Melville. It becomes clear that the idealistic couple cannot ignore the realities outside. The melancholy, the conflicts, the unhappiness, the ravages of time and society. Indeed, there is a strong contrast between the desire to fully live a job, to embrace it, and the inability to prevent the recurrence of adversity.

Lacoste's commitment to Pantheon is an striking here as it was in *Minotaur*. Here, all though much of the story takes place in the salon, the four walls seem not to restrict them at all — indeed, the use of Pantheon tends to suggest that their relationship transcends such bounds. That their love, to integrate Hamlet, makes her capable of speech, though bounded by a natural. The set itself heightens our sense that their world unfolds spontaneously despite the limited size and indeed despite the actual presence of a client (as is evident in one of the film's most striking scenes). Although inspired by Tassoular, Lacoste utilizes Pantheon in a bold and distinctive manner.



Michael Hays as a music adds another intriguing dimension to the film, just as the use of lighting heightens the sense of tension. Hays provides a merely elegant, conventional melody (to complement the minimalist score) and a melody that itself suggests great passion but also a sense of longing, a hint of melancholy that is not really necessary. Light is allowed to flood in through the windows (in the table), even though they are in the background much of the time (a unique and all lighting is also been used). The predominant use of soft lighting creates a sense of expansive kindness, space and gives Melville an almost angelic aura, a magical halo. There is a strong sense of moments which are interrupted, pausing, this is similar to Chopin's strategy in *Order*. Lacoste's sense of space is aesthetically and intelligently articulated.

In some respects, however, the film is not entirely convincing. Some elements are deliberate, for example, the use of the storm itself as a sign of impending strife is too familiar to have the required impact. One wonders also what Antoine did between childhood and maturity. Were there other headmasters, or did he have actually grow up disturbed? The script provides no clear answers. And why does Melville accept Antoine's proposal?

The greatest risk was the decision to portray such people. Two people whose clearly in love, have, and seek, no friends and have no apparent interest beyond enjoying one another or company do not necessarily make for the most compelling viewing. But it is fortunate that Lacoste manages to handle our interest, risk, motivation, for the most part. (The "real love" was then a necessary definition to the film.)

That the film is pessimistic should not be a surprise. It is notable that both headmasters make choices which are sad. Though Antoine, unlike him, is not an object of suspicion or ridicule, he is something of an outcast because of his preferences. Indeed, he has exposed the true status of his father's beliefs regarding the "singularity" of his and the attainment of desire, the true status of Antoine's status of happiness (as a determined hair dresser's husband), as well as his mistaken perceptions of Melville ("nothing ever bothers her") and the realization that the desire to make the most of the "good things" in life requires a knowledge of the fleeting nature of things. Like Daisy and Truffaut, Lacoste can deal with serious matters with elegance, dignity and a beguiling lightness of touch. Here, death itself is transformed suddenly and fearfully into a way of triumphing over time, and its expected ravages, into a statement of appreciation.

LE MARI DE LA COPIEUSE (THE HUSBAND OF THE GLUTTON) Directed by Pierre Lacoste. Producer: Thierry De Gény. Line producer: Marjorie Desmar. Scriptwriters: Claude Rocco. Production: Claude Rocco. Director of photography: Claude Desnoes. Art director: Peter Mendelsohn. Costume designer: Daria Magron. Sound editor: Pierre Lenoir. Editor: Jeanne Hays. Composer: Michael Hays. Cast: Jean Rocher (Antoine), Anna Galina (Melville), Richard Martin (Antoine's father), Maurice Dorel (Agopian), Philippe Dorel (Melville's), Jacques Melin (Dr. Chirac), Claude Rocco (Daisy's father), Albert Dorel (Bouvier), Barry Hocking (70-year-old Antoine), Taty Magdon (Melville's 100-year-old), Lacoste (Pantheon), T.F.I. Films Production. Also known as: *Le mari de la copieuse*. 35 mm. 100 mins. France, 1981.

ively brilliant moments—in particular, the scene in which Maki and Eddie balance precariously on a bridge, poised to jump into the river below, but neither trusting the other to join in the leap of faith—and some impressive black humor. The photography is admirable, and the scenes in which Claudia Karvan appears as Reggie's warmbed friend Clare have a significance and slinkiness about them which stand in welcome relief to the dark diaphanous of other characters within the film. But it is probably precisely because the inventiveness about justice by the film is so black, so unlike the Gumbo Street image of vibrant Australia, and because there's nothing to copy assumptions of this in the Lucky Country, that *Mistral's on the River* may well remain a film that people should see but probably won't.

HOLIDAYS ON THE RIVER YAMBA Directed by Leo Barmack. Produced: Flahie-Goldstein. Screenplay: Leo Barmack. Director of photography: Preston Luzzati. Producer: Designer: Margaret Berggren. Sound: Gordon Mack. Tapes: Brian Leo Barmack. Composer: Sam Miller. Cast: Cindy Adams (Claudia), Lisa Ellis (Maki), Alan Meninger (Big Mac), Tim Corbett (Benny), Claudia Karvan (Clare), Julieanne Paterson. Australian distributor: Rialto. 85 min. 16 mm. Australia, 1991.

MISTER JOHNSON

RAYMOND YOUNG

Bruce Beresford is talented in literature as again evident in his adaptation of Gary's *Mister Johnson* (his last film, if you ask), was an adaptation of an off-Broadway play, *Driving Miss Daisy*. Although the films make a faithful adaptation, there are some major differences. For example, Johnson is around 17 years old in the novel and seems "half-grown" with a small body. Flaubert is about short with reddish hair, and so on. In the film, Johnson (played by Clint) is not a teenager at all and Beresford seems justified in his casting choice

the character provides the emotional and dramatic core of the film.

The similarities between the film and the novel are more notable. As stated earlier, the film is true to the spirit of the novel to a remarkable extent. Gary's Johnson is a poet (at least) who creates for himself, or attempts to create for himself, an aura of glory. It is worth remembering that the character appears whose experiences Gary drew was an African slave who could control nothing more with a single word a man who (based on having been passed by white elephants and of having committed homicide on the frontier, even though he is terrified. lived as a James Clark in a great station). Beresford's Johnson is certainly an excellent, lyrical and often offering individual a poem which is reinforced in his love of dance and song. He, like, has a poetic sensibility.

Two other aspects of the film recall the novel. Johnson's worship of Flaubert (Pearce Brown), who represents the emergence of the Empire in Nigeria, and Johnson's devotion to the ideas and values of the English way of life (interest), this devotion is the source of some amusing moments in the film. For example, Johnson carries an umbrella even though the sky is cloudless and is extremely proud of his Englishman's leather shoes even though they are the source of some physical discomfort to him.

The plot is a cleverly condensed version of the novel. The essential tensions and the major characters are included. Johnson applies his considerable powers of imagination to finding solutions to Flaubert's problems, but not always in ways which are prudent or disconcerting. The consequence? He is isolated by a potentially at best of criticism and self-misapprehension of lands (even though Gary and Beresford make it clear that Johnson has no intent to commit crimes. His aim is to help Flaubert, and it is one of the Flaubert's stories put the film that

those to whom Johnson dedicates his efforts are precisely the ones who are obliged to witness his punishment). Indeed, the scenes are quite striking. Johnson's imagination finds its expression in Flaubert in the sense that Flaubert becomes his agent so we are not always sure who is the superior and who the inferior, the road which is completed by virtue of Johnson's ingenuity, and which opens up a new world—and to which Johnson is committed—leads to his demise.

Like the novel, the film provides an important explanation of the damaging effects of colonization. Johnson in fact, becomes a stranger in two worlds, despite his ingenious efforts to become a part of both. He is betrayed by the allegors who are loyal to the reality sought to be seen his court, for example, his wife, Clara (Patricia Richardson), is allegorical and is responsible with her family for torturing him in. And as a condemned man, only the pompousness of the "lingers gentlemen" link him to the colonizers, even though in a typically generous gesture he parts with the most important objects of the end.

It is clear that his wife's allegiances are with the imperial ways and it is perhaps characteristic of Johnson that he never really seems to understand the consequences of this. His efficient, understandably, is reluctant to defy orders in order to save Johnson, even though Johnson defied laws and ethics to help him. Even his ignorance (a major concern in the film and novel), by which he bridges both worlds to a certain extent, cannot deliver him in the end. Indeed the suggestion is that the untutored exercise of the imagination can have serious, even tragic consequences. Although Johnson's imagination has a lasting effect on Flaubert in the sense that it frees him from the strict (object of reality) conventions and stifling regulations the film, like the novel, suggests that it must be subordinated to the recognition of ethical boundaries and legal frameworks.

Beresford is acknowledged as a first director of vision, as his not surprising that the performance of the film's central role. The major character is Johnson, and what emerges is a colorful and endearing personality, a warm-hearted, generous, resilient spirit with a depth of feeling that is quite remarkable. Also, what emerges as a part of this personality is an intellect and great ingenuity to consider consequences. If Johnson is a poet in some respects, he is also a dreamer in the sense that he seems not to be aware of the serious nature of his imagination, so does not to possess any great sense of responsibility.

But it is Edward Woodward who very neatly adds the film as *Dolly* is funny, foolish and not so short like a woman who is devoted to give the abuse of a helpless woman and the Fox Dollars



Technic

Introduction

Welcome to the new-look "Technicalities".

Ever get the feeling that you're irrelevant? Somewhere along the way to keeping up with the latest technologies in image-making, this section of the magazine had lost the plot.

The 'plot', as I read it, is that this is a technical-based section of a 'cinema' magazine, and a magazine where the readership is wider than the small group of people associated with the Australian film and television industry. But if it is not relevant to them, there is nowhere else to turn. *Cinema Papers* is it.

So if you detect a drift away from video and computer articles towards more film-based information, it is entirely intentional. There are other magazines that cover those areas (and I voraciously read them all), but this is going to be a technical section for filmmakers and users.

From inside looking out at the film-based technology of cinema, there is none of the explosive growth of video and computers technology. The changes have been small, continual and cosmetic, with fifty-year-old hardware still being used. But there is a wind of change and it is the application of those electronics and computer innovations that has stirred the spill air. (A perfect example is the new ARRI 535, pictured below. Also, see Arri technological highlights on p. 52.)

It is a commercial reality that the delivery format of most film images will eventually be on video. Computer and digital processing will allow for higher resolution video and broadcast techniques (HDTV) to be developed, but, in the practical real world, the effect has been to point to film as the cheapest high-quality image-making format for a long time yet.



The effect of this realization has been added impetus and reassurance for equipment manufacturers and groups looking to cut costs and speed up the processes that add time/cost in the production of film. This has brought emphasis to non-linear edit systems for features and series, and towards things such as Super 16.

There are many other aspects of the craft that fit into the 'technical' description. Covering these and the art involved will be the editorial brief for the new "Technicalities", and I'm looking forward to the challenge to make it relevant for readers and advertisers alike.

FRED HARDEN

calities

Super 16 The Australian Experience

DOMINGO-CASER REPORTS ON A SPECIAL AGGREGATION, NORMALLY ON THE 18 AUGUST 1991, AND THE CURRENT STATE OF SUPER 16.

It is a sign of the times that the promised changes in television standards are causing more of a flurry in film production techniques than any the cinema or photographic developments.

The battle between film and television has for some years been fought on the grounds that 35mm film gives a better definition than a video camera (as well as giving the tonally softer "film look"). But now, with High Definition Television getting endlessly closer, film has come back fighting with the apparent advantage that television's best standard you can be matched by 16mm film with one hand tied behind its back.

Super 16 negatives use single perforated stock, exposing image right-out to the non-perforated edge (the area reserved for snow-track in standard 16 prints). The wider gate gives an aspect ratio of 1.55:1, closely matching the theatrical wide screen format, whereas standard 16 has the conventional television screen ratio of 1.33:1.

Back in the early 1950s, 16mm film was just about okay for conventional television production (although in the U.S. it has never been considered as anything other than a "low-budget" format). But why bother with film? As video originates get easier and easier, good old "quality waste" has progressively become a less practical or affordable medium. And with talk of higher definition television "just around the corner" offering 30mm film resolution, the future of 16mm does seem all that brilliant.

So what has changed? Film, for one thing, and television for another.

"HI-16": A FILM GAUGE, A NEW TELEVISION FORMAT, ON A SONG BY CHUCK BERRY

At a recent Australian Cinematographers' Society meeting in Sydney, Leanne's John Beering showed a very impressive 7-minute presenter reel demonstrating (and explaining) the Super 16 to 35 blow-up techniques. It is good, in fact, very good. Call John and ask him to. Then ask to see the negative: nothing else will convince you that this was not a 35mm original. The magic ingredient according to John is Kodak's new TMS 5051 daylight stock, although even the higher speed members of the ESR family of stocks, such as 7288, looked very good. John also helped prise on the laboratory. Conveyer, who had only received the 16mm negative the day before. Negative matching, two stages of blow-up and duplication, sound transfer and a graded print in Sydney the following evening must all seem kind of record, though hopefully not a precedent.

HI-16 COALITION

IF Europe, a group of equipment manufacturers, filmmakers and service providers has dusted off the Super 16 idea. They call themselves the Hi-16 Coalition. Super 16 film and High Definition Television was already know about, but Hi-16's wide angle. For film release, a Super 16 multi print is projected, with sound coming from interlocked DLT or CD players.

But it's not such a new angle at all. Didn't The Jazz Singer use synchronized discs for Al Jolson's numbers back in 1927? One of the drawbacks with the early sound-on-disc systems was the tendency to lose sync, particularly if the film had broken and been spliced together a frame or two short. No such problems with Compact Disc, the Hi-16 people point out by matching to a control track on the film, the digital sound will always adjust itself to match the picture in the event of any loss of sync.

The Super 16 film format isn't so old as sound-on-disc. Originally proposed by the Swedish cameraman Rune Skogse in 1970, it has had steady use in Europe, with bursts of enthusiasm from time to time. But we are seeing a great resurgence has of interest now, mostly because of its proposed use as a shooting format for high definition television.

KODAK'S CORPORATE VIEW: THE DIGITAL HIGHWAY

Since Sony started their development programme for high Definition TV back in 1978, the film and television world has changed more than a little. Enormous strides forward in simulation technology—the T-gain—have almost made HDTV obsolete before it has arrived. But the competition for ever better quality and ever-increasing ways of distributing programmes has opened up many

JOHN BEERING, FROM LEANE, WITH AARON STEIN CAMERA AT THE SYDNEY ACC MEETING





1911 ANALOG CAMERA DESIGN

- 1917 Company founded by August Arnold and Robert Richter (RPR) trademark protected from last two letters of Arnold's and Richter's last names
- 1924 First Analox camera (KINAMAX 35) introduced
- 1925 Introduced first Analox lighting fixture. Product line has been introduced continuously to the present
- 1927 First Analox film developing machine with motor drive introduced
- 1932 Spinning mirror reflex shutter invented as RPR by Oskar Design Engineer Erich Krammer. Krammer's design permits 60 film shooting through motion picture cameras for the first time
- 1937 Designed and built the Analox 25 camera. Forerunner of the limited 8MM 35-camera. First 35mm film camera with opening mirror reflex shutter
- 1952 Introduced the Analox 16mm camera, the first professional reflex viewing (or video) system. Video magnification camera system
- 1960 Introduced Analox 16mm camera, first Analox self-filmed 16mm production camera
- 1966 Academy Award. Scientific and Engineering Award for the design and development of the Analox 35mm portable motion picture reflex camera
- 1970 Introduced the Analox 35mm, lightweight, eye-level production camera system
- 1975 Introduced the world's first highlights at Munich-Olympics
- 1973 Academy Award. Scientific and Engineering Award for the development and engineering of the Analox 35mm motion picture camera
- 1974 Introduced the Analox 16mm three production camera system. It incorporated the revolutionary swing-over viewfinder design
- 1979 Introduced the Analox 35-3 1600 camera
- 1982 Academy Award of Merit (Oscar Statue) for the concept and engineering of the first professional 35mm hand-held, opening-mirror reflex motion picture camera
- 1987 Academy Award. Scientific and Engineering Award given to Zeeb for the design and development of high speed 35mm motion picture cameras known
- 1988 Academy Award of Scientific and Engineering Award for the concept and engineering of the Analox 35-3 motion picture camera
- Introduced RPR Cine, the newest line of lighting and grip stands and equipment
- 1989 Introduced the Analox 16mm camera system
- 1990 Introduced the Analox 35mm camera system. This advanced camera incorporated an advanced feature design concept and technologies, such as a Swing-out Viewfinder and Programmable Shutter Control and Frame Rate Selection that are unique to RPR

other areas of development, and the crystal ball gazing are taking faster than ever.

Richard Kuder presented Kodak a corporate view of the future — 'the digital highway' (or is that the Yellow Back Road?) — touching on almost every major area of development in image production today. Much of Kodak's vision concerns theatrical entertainment, feature films in the cinema. The Kodak vision includes a personal hope (expressed in the words of Joerg Aspin, V.P. of the Motion Picture division of Eastman Kodak), that more and more old cinemas would be restored as single-screen "palaces" of the area. (In Sydney, the only old anything still standing, the State Theatre, is in line for conversion to a live theatre. Are we ahead of or behind the U.S.?)

Not surprisingly, though, the future will bring more contact between film and television imaging. Originating images on film, television productions are already using the convenience of random access editing, but then making back to a final cut negative, using the barcode edge-number system to automate the process. The film image has always had the advantage of being compatible with all present television standards. Now it carries sufficient resolution to satisfy any High Definition TV requirements for the latest cable future, and Kodak points to the known superior archival qualities of film for long-term preservation of material.

Some of the big developments will touch local producers earlier than others: some of them will spin off to the smaller productions, commercials and documentaries quite quickly. Cinema Digital Sound has already been used on a few features overseas; Terminator 2, Judgment Days, the latest.

Among the other steps along the digital highway, Kodak counted as electronic intermediate system — a video editing and graphics manipulation system with all the quality of film — being developed at Kodak Australia's headquarters in Coburg. As well, Kodak has embraced the steps towards High Definition TV, with the convincing argument that film is the only medium suitable for image expansion in the HDTV world, with figures and graphs to prove that even 16mm film can provide the resolution required.

SUPER 16 PRODUCTION

After the Yellow Back Road, it was up to Bruce Willis' case of Ache to bring us back to earth. After all, the meeting was billed as a 'Super 16 night'. Bruce has been the laboratory expert on Super 16 for a good few years, and reminded us of the many features already shot in that format. There are currently three post-production routes, leading respectively to 35mm prints for theatrical release, to a tape finish, or to a standard 16 print. He guided the audience through the steps involved in each one, and some of the pitfalls.

Much the same theme was taken up by John Rowing of Lantic Film & Video, quite clearly a Super 16 enthusiast. John recommended Anco 37H cameras, adaptable between super and standard 16 in a matter of minutes. The Anco camera can also be converted, but involves a two-day factory operation. (Although, according to the Verdict of the John Barry Group, a simpler conversion is 'on the way'). Lantic publish a Super 16 handbook, packed full of practical information about the format: lenses to choose, framing difficulties, laboratory requirements.

One on-going difficulty used to be in the case of telecine transfer. Having gone to the trouble of shooting a picture in a widescreen format, a special telecine gate is needed to cope with

*While it may not be well known that Dennis Cass was a founding member of the Super 16mm Academy Society, Dennis is well known to most Sydney film and tech technicians. He was the technical face of the now defunct Cinema Centre long time office bearer and member of the SMPTE. He is now working at the University of Technology (Sydney) and is consulted for a number of technical clients, including Pines Engineering and Kodak.

the image and convert it back to standard television ratio. After various solutions, there is now a game for the Rank Cintel, manufactured by Luminate, and one for the AAV/ Melforma. Apparently this resolves all earlier problems.

POST-PRODUCTION: FILM OR TAPE?

When *Super 16* first raised its head in Australia, I was less than convinced by it. Indeed, I was a founder member of the Super Sixteen Skeptical Society. One of the things that puzzled me was why anyone would go to the trouble of shooting on a widescreen format, if they were planning to go to video. But that was then, this is the future. Shoot on widescreen today for HDTV release tomorrow (or whenever it arrives) is the current catchcry. Mind you, let's rush out a first release on PAL TV.

But for the *Super 16* producer, this presents a dilemma that hasn't really been addressed. Whether to bother to transfer to tape from the original negative, or from a fully graded intercut print.

It is true that *Super 16* film can contain HDTV for encoding power, but all the figures are for the original negative. Once you make a print there are losses—print collapse, optical film—that can't be avoided. So, the ultimate quality requires a neg-to-tape transfer. In London, the Limby facility is, I believe, the only place in the world where you can get a first-generation PAL transfer from final cut negative (A & B rolls). They use two linked telecines running in tandem.

WHO'LL BE THE FIRST TO INSTALL TWO HOTV TELECINES? WITH SUPER 16 GATES?

While we wait, an off-line edit followed by a conventional film negative match and a fully graded contact print seems the most effective method, using any of the non-linear editing and timecode/keycode translation systems around. The *Super 16* print will serve as a master for transfer to all current television systems (taking the sound from the final mix negative).

CAN YOU AFFORD NOT TO SHOOT FILM FOR TELEVISION?

For some time, one decision to be made quite early in any production is: Can I afford to shoot film for television? Now the question John Bowring asks is: "Can I afford not to shoot film for television?" For *Super 16* is—a bold phrase this—"Future-proof".

There's no doubt that *Way up* film *Super 16* look better than ever. There's no doubt that a good original can match—to the eye—the average results from 35mm. The official figures are a little ambiguous, but what is certain is that 35mm negative is the stepchild, and that *Super 16* and HDTV are roughly comparable, a little way behind.

But given the average viewer's acceptance of even VHS cassette, it seems to me that the most noticeable thing about HDTV will be its shape. Surprisingly, the one thing that all systems have in common is an aspect ratio of 16:9, or 1.77:1. Present day television programming tape masters, be they PAL or NTSC, are all the nearly square 1.33:1. I suspect that a good quality standards conversion up to HDTV would satisfy many viewers, except for the old-fashioned shape which wastes the wide areas of widescreen. But given the choice of cropping heads and tails, with substantially further loss of line resolution, or black making on both sides of the broadcast image, most programme managers would opt for neither, and buy a programme that is already widescreen.

And that is the simple reason that *Super 16* addresses. Originally introduced to augment 1650m television, the widescreen format failed to make television go away, and instead became an embarrassment to directors of photography who were anxious about their framing. Now at last television is turning its face—and widescreen—to 16mm production, which may turn out to be the saving grace of film imaging systems.

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Super 16: A Technical Guide

BOOKS AND LENSES FROM A REBEL HAVE BOTH PREPARED TECHNICAL LEAFLETS COVERING MANY OF THE KINKS OF SUPER 16 PRODUCTION. THEIR GUIDE TO THE DETAILS OF PRODUCTION TECHNIQUES PROVIDES A LIST OF THE MANUFACTURERS AND SUPPLIERS OF SUPER 16 EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES. THIS GUIDE IS PRESENTED IN THESE TWO PUBLICATIONS AND FROM A NUMBER OF OTHER SOURCES. (P. 10)

SUPER 16: THE FUTURE-PROOF FILM

16mm film dates back to 1929, but the Super 16 format only dates back to the early 1970s. Originally, Super 16 was designed as a low cost wide-screen negative medium for blow-up to 35mm wide-screen theatrical release. However, today's situation allows possibilities to have become available, and Super 16 is now also available as an original medium for High Definition Television (HDTV), or even direct projection on Super-16 projectors interconnected with high fidelity sound on Compact Disc or Digital Audio Tape.

Film has been shown to carry massively more picture information than any of the proposed HDTV systems, and may be suited for many years longer (under the current conditions) than current videotape. (Both in definition and format) and its longevity makes a programme shot on Super-16 "future proof" for some years to come.

SUPER 16: THE FORMAT

The Super 16 format makes use of the greatest possible picture area on 16mm negative. Compared with standard 16, the picture extends about 20% more in screen height, leaving the standard 16 soundtrack area.

This produces an original negative aspect ratio (screen shape) of 1.85:1, identical to the European standard for widescreen projection in the U.S. and in Australia. Widescreen is the slightly lighter 1.85:1. This results in only a slight cropping of the original image.

HDTV will have an aspect ratio of 1.77:1 midway between the two different cinema standards. (To date, they are about the only standard that all the high definition television systems have in common.) Thus nearly all the original negative material will be used for transfer to whichever cinema or television format is required. This results in a substantial increase in the image quality, compared with blow-ups from standard 16 negative.

At a 1.77:1 ratio the Super 16 negative has 42% more image area than standard-16.

SUPER 16: FOR CONVENTIONAL TELEVISION

If Super 16 programmes were converted to their original aspect ratio, there would be a black mark at the top and bottom of the television screen. The entire negative area would be used, so there would be less film grain in the final



THE SUPER 16
ON VIDEO IS CAMERA
THE ACTION NEW FILM

television image, but the image would be smaller than a full-screen image.

If the entire screen width were to be used, it would be necessary to crop a small strip from behind right of the image (approximately 1/8 inch each side). The result would be comparable to conventional standard 16 production.

Rank Color film (16 telecine film) with a Super 16 gate allows the full width of the negative to be scanned, so that full width or full height images can be produced. To obtain a correctly centered image, the gate must be repositioned approximately 1 mm to the right. The new "Luxarwin" telecine gate greatly simplifies conversion of the Rank for Super 16. In addition, Super 16 cameras are available for Bosch and Maresca telecines.

SUPER 16: RESOLUTION FOR HIGH DEFINITION TELEVISION

The new generation of film stocks has greatly improved the image quality obtainable from 16mm film. Grain size is much smaller in these types of film, and the slower speed film stocks, such as Kodak Fortia, give the best results. In a paper presented at Ulstercon Montreal in 1985, Kodak compared the resolving power of 35mm film, 16mm film (Super and standard) and HDTV. The Modulation Transfer Function (M.T.F.) for each format, multiplied by the frame height in each case, showed the degree of contrast loss at a range of frequencies corresponding to line and line detail. In the case of video equipment, the limiting resolution corresponds to the number of lines in the television picture. The graphs show that a Super 16 negative performs better than the HDTV system at all levels of detail.

SUPER 16: CAMERAS AND LENSES

Essentially a Super 16 camera is the same as a standard 16 camera, with just four differences. The picture aperture is overlapped to the Super 16 area, the lens is recentered in its mount to the new Super 16 center line, and the viewfinder has the extended markings of the Super 16 frame on its ground glass. Finally, all 16mm transport areas (jokers, magazine, etc.) are modified to support the Super 16 film by the narrow edge left outside the extended picture area.

AUTOMATIC and XTR cameras have the advantage of being designed by Super 16 pioneer Jean-Marie Rivestville. These cameras have Super 16 alternatives as standard features, with a lens mount that rotates to accommodate for Super or standard 16 positions.

The JUREPLUS 16 SP81 is available in a dedicated Super 16 version, but the conversion between a Super and standard is not easy. While simpler and cheaper conversions are promised, it seems best to stick with one format if the other.

With any Super 16 camera it is important to check for pressure fogging as well as scratching. Current film stocks are tougher but their emulsions are more sensitive, and a light rub (often at the edge of the standard 16 area, but well within Super 16 image) may not show up until after processing.

Some standard 16 lenses may not cover the extended Super 16 area, resulting in "vignetting" around the corners of the image. Check corner lenses at their widest angle of view, and smallest aperture. A range of zoom lenses for Super 16 has been introduced by Canon, Cooke, and Angenieux. (The Lumax booklet

has a complete list of zoom and fixed lenses along with a list of cameras that they know have been, or are able, to be converted for Super 16.)

As with any "blow up" job, image quality and sharpness is especially critical. Select the best available lenses, and take extra care with dusting and cleaning.

SUPER 16 FILMSTOCKS AND EXPOSURES

Naturally, single perf stock must be used. The emulsion must have the grain and color characteristics specifications (performance/lot/number).

Graininess

New stocks are substantially less grainy than before. However, when slowing a print, the eye tends to focus on the sharpest element of the image, which may well be the grain structure. (Graininess is a negative factor in the largest print, but this can be suppressed with a high-contrast image and rich black shadows.)

Underexposure in the sun/water/sky/skyline image. If you overexpose the image by lighting from three to one stop, a "sluggish" scene will be richer and more detailed. Image will be obtained.

Avoid special techniques such as flaring and face processing. These tend to degrade the image to an unacceptable amount. Modern color negative emulsions have considerable latitude, and, although under exposure should be avoided, this is not helped by face processing. Some experiments have been done in 16mm using post-processing (color development combined with over exposure) to limit grain and, these tests may be worth repeating for Super 16.

Figure composition

Filling the Super 16 frame will present no problems when blowing up for 16mm theatrical release or for future HDTV. The final image will be the same full width and there will only be marginal cropping from top and bottom (less than 5%). The camera/viewfinder should indicate the 1.33:1 frame he got, slightly outside the TV safe area.

What there is a potential problem is on the camera (PAL or NTSC) system. Some cropping will take place — this on a variable of the frame — so that the image remains central. Naturally, you should use the "Line 1 & Protect" method, ensuring that no strong elements (such as microphones [or displays]) appear in these areas.

Multiple framing for Super 16 is easier than when shooting standard 16 for television and blow-up, when cropping occurs at top and bottom of the frame in the cinema.

SUPER 16 AND THE LABORATORY

Ensure that all Super 16 film sent to the lab is clearly labeled as such, so that correct equipment and handling procedures are used. While the film gauge is the same, there are a number of special considerations that your lab must take into account. Discuss the production with the lab before you start. Processing is exactly same as for standard 16. Work prints are done

DESK-TOP NON-LINEAR FOR FEATURES, ETC.

Firstly, I am an AVID user and have been for about 5 months. The system has been very reliable and has kept me both

STEPHEN P. SMITH
MANAGING DIRECTOR
FRAMWORKS EDIT PTT LTD

digitizing picture (digitizing is the transfer of sound and vision to disc). This seems to be a long and tedious

process, particularly when compared to the speed of optical editing on the non-linear system. AVID has attempted to deal with this with the provision of Motion, which is a software package which controls a serial interface machine which allows you to log all material, while at the same time digitizing data base all of the material which can be accessed at any time during the editing process. All "OK" takes are then serial and automatically digitized into the AVID. The digitizing process is real time, like dubbing from one machine onto another. Lightworks provides a similar software logging package.

The big question now is, "Should I look at desk-top non-linear for my next feature, serial or tele-serial?" The answer to that question is a resounding "Yes, but!" The but! make sure you have done your homework.

There currently are three big projects floating around out there and I have had to take a long hard look at which system Frameworks would need to provide. There are really only two contenders at the moment: AVID and Lightworks. Although not wishing to divulge ORG completely, for the moment they cannot give full facts which is a minimal custom to an editor. For the sake of this exercise, let's only look at where the systems are here and now.

I won't get into a side-by-side comparison of the systems here. I am sure that before a decision on which system to use is made, you will have a long hard look at your options. Both systems have great and similar features, and are priced about the same. Your decision will come down to personal taste.

Firstly, I would like to cover an issue which is relative to both systems. The issue of logging, digitizing and archiving of material.

Lightworks is being aggressively marketed as an editing machine in film editions. In fact, Lightworks is very emotional about the issue of film, almost to the point of animosity. "Well, if you really only want a film editor, then Lightworks is the only system for your film." The catch, not all of what it means.

Currently, the biggest bottle-neck to non-linear editing is the logging and

process, particularly when compared to the speed of optical editing on the non-linear system. AVID has attempted to deal with this with the provision of Motion, which is a software package which controls a serial interface machine which allows you to log all material, while at the same time digitizing data base all of the material which can be accessed at any time during the editing process. All "OK" takes are then serial and automatically digitized into the AVID. The digitizing process is real time, like dubbing from one machine onto another. Lightworks provides a similar software logging package.

For larger projects, the archiving of material and quick access to that material is essential. Here is where the two systems part company. Lightworks archives on optical disc. However, it can only access sequential vision for editing from the hard drives. This means that once you are finished with one batch of material from the optical discs. Although this process can be done at below real-time speed, it will still require two hours to load back onto material. This also inhibits the ability to go back and grab takes which may not have been loaded to the hard drives. AVID is the only system which stores optical drives with 4000 resolution at full-frame rate on line. After digitizing directly to the optical discs, these discs can then be used directly on line without the need to transfer files to the hard drive. It takes all at about 10 seconds to change a disc.

Access files on the optical discs is slower than that of the hard drives. Editors will find the use of optical somewhat "sluggish" as compared to hard drives. But the trade-off is cost. 1400 for an optical disc as compared to 95,000 for a hard disc.

Before choosing, do some research.



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Equipping for digital (hybrid) means fitting the projector with digital readers supplied by Dolby Laboratories and adding a digital decoding unit to the sound system ahead of the Dolby Stereo processor.

As with the developments that preceded it, Dolby S/D has attended to sound audiences groups: the viewer — to enjoy the combination of a big detailed picture and superb multi-channel sound that can be experienced only in the theatre.

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on a conventional cinema contact printer fitted with a full aperture gate

Fitting and Negative Matching

Flashes screening and editing projectors request the same care and details as cameras to simply fitting an open gate mask may not be enough to shape the entire image on the screen. Most contact editing machines can be converted to Super 16, and of course, they remain suitable for standard 16 editing. When editing standard 16 you may need to mask off the right hand edge of the screen.

Negative matching may be done in the normal checkerboard A & B roll format, using single perforation blank splicing. However, any imperfections in the negative splice tend to be magnified in the subsequent blow up. This can be avoided by the "bars out" technique, where each scene overlaps the next by four frames, or by optical printing from full takes assembled in a single negative roll. Discuss these alternatives with your lab and your negative matcher before starting with the scissors.

In any case, reels should be edited to a maximum length of 550 feet if a blow up to 35mm is required. This length will extend, with leaders, to about 1,000 feet of 24mm.

Tapes and Opticals

For best results opticals and opticals (print then sample takes and blow-ups) should be produced in 35mm, with the background blow up from Super 16 negative on 35mm master positives. The 35mm optical negatives are then cut in with the blow up negative, or dropped in to the video after separate take-to-take transfer.

Opticals can be shot directly onto Super 16 negative (to be cut in with the original negative) this requires a Super 16 optical print gate. This method would be necessary if a complete Super 16 release print is required.

The Answer Print

A Super 16 answer print, fully graded and well gate printed can be made to approximate (proof) and this print may be used for direct transfer to tape. Alternatively a low contrast (saturation) print may be preferred. Super 16 positives to coach for a turnaround, so screening must be double-headed using a magnetic track. The European Hi-16 solution is promising the use of edge timecode to link the projector to a high quality digital source such as CD or DAT. The projectors are available from Europe in West Germany and others, but the control track is not ready yet.

Transfer Transfer

Super 16 film (negative or print) may be transferred directly to PAL tape via the Rank Cintel MK 18 fitted with a Super 16 gate, and modified film transport system.

In the matter of HDTV, developments are moving fast and work done on the joint development by Rank and Rank has in fact confirmed the suitability of Super 16 as a HDTV format.

Blow-up for 35mm Theatrical Prints

A 35mm duplicate negative is prepared via an intermediate positive. For best image quality, the blow up should be done at the first stage to make a 35mm intermediate. Alternatives such as a Super 16 intermediate blown up to 35mm optical negative, although slightly cheaper, will produce noticeably worse image quality.

The blow up is usually head masked in the 1:50:1 ratio, to produce a black frame line in the 35mm print.

Super 16 with Standard 16

Super 16 and standard 16 negative cannot be cut together. If material in both formats is to be used, separate rolls of negative must be assembled. Printer settings are different for each format, and so the blow ups are done separately. The separate intermediates may then be cut together before making the contact duplicate negative.

If you want a standard 16 print from a Super 16 negative, this will require expensive optical or processing, so that the image is suitably confined. Edge artefacts of image will be cropped from both sides.

SUPER 16: A NOTE OF CAUTION

Many past production people I have spoken to (editing in the lab, opticals and neg matching) are cautious about Super 16. The rotation film size is difficult to handle, and yet it requires considerably more care than 35mm, as any marks or dirt show up relatively larger on the screen. In particular, the sprocket area on the non-perf side of the film is very narrow, and leaves little room for rollers or edge guides in synchronizers, printers and so on.

It does not taken throughout the production, however, the results will be excellent, unless (if HDTV) quality with the advantages of a 16mm shoot. And for the staunch detractors, it is time to be good, then 35mm must be really something!

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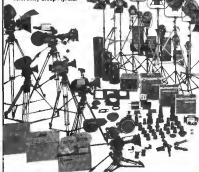
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quality issue by treating in a pejorative and irrelevant remark about commercialism. From a serious academic, this is inexcusable.

James then makes a bizarre remark about the commercial success of his requests. Again, what has that to do with the quality issues he has set himself up as discussing? (Anybody, most people are commercial failures. The fact that there are not is merely a tribute to the limitations and something worthy of celebration.)

Worse is Jones: "There is no objection to suggest that Australian cinema goes unprotected to the Australian rather than foreign market." Yet again, there has nothing to do with the quality of Australian film, unless one demonstrates the connection.

Now, James will may argue that his book is essentially about economics and that the above section is atypical. How, then, does James react on economics? Well, not too well.

In Chapter 1, for example, there is a brief pointed history of the structure of exhibition and distribution in Australia. Jones reveals himself only as well with a sub-head: "The Heavy Hand of Regulation." He then says (p. 3): "In fact, the author is... "Once the conviction of market failure was established, it was a short step to a variety of recommendations that would lead to greater government regulation in the industry."

After a short analysis of the 1973 Tariff Board Inquiry, he then confides to himself with "most of the Tariff Board's recommendations for greater intervention in the industry were repeated" (p. 4) eight times on a footnote: "The shelving of the proposals of the Tariff Board."

Jones then jumps to the 1984 New South Wales Inquiry (finishing with "The controversial recommendations of this inquiry [...] were not accepted by the NSW State government" (p. 5).

Thus, Jones fails to list here in single examples at "greater government's regulation" despite having alleged it as the chief of the section. This is not scholarship; it is unsubstantiated propagandizing.

Turning to another section at random, the chapter titled "The National Intervention," Jones talks about executive producers like being "con-siderable" (sic) not come, but all it seems. He even mentions that "Chambers and Jones (1987) note that such fees are as high as \$200,000 per film. What a luxury! For one, such it each film needed, they would represent but an extremely small percentage of the many hundreds of exorbitant fees paid in the past decade. Again, Jones is being dangerous."

After then deciding "starlets paid to production personnel also [...] more so," Jones gives a short (copied from *APC Moving*) on the salary increases from 1985/86 to 1986/87. But Jones gives no proportionate analysis of how salary increases contributed to these budget increases. There is also no analysis of the massive stock equipment and laboratory costs or of total expenses. Jones does not take into account the side-on 108A costs (projectors, telecine, light, etc.) which constituted up to 80 per cent of a budget.

A few lines on, Jones then claims, "Addi-tionally to the film industry but apparently not

the greatest impact on employment and wages in the industry." Given Jones has been talking fifty about salary and budget increases, one's headbanging at a remark is automatically provoked (i.e., assistance equals ignorance). Why does not Jones, as he ought to have, analyze how the AFC has encouraged the lowering of salaries through its low-budget fund, or how the FCC associated salary limitations in Trust Fund film?

In fact, the average budget in the late 1980s, early 1990s is far lower than that of a few years before. Jones does not bother to record or discuss this.

Now Jones may claim that the printed photo he followed stopped at 1985/86, but as the book came out in July 1991, why did he not do his homework on the intervening period? Up to dateless claims not to have been it, probably. Or, was there a hidden agenda that lowering budgets did not meet?

In fact, the chapter that reveals the bookmaker what it is, and the quoted open books for the (in fact) is Chapter 3: "Arguments for Intervention." Here Jones spends his pages listing what he claims are the main rationales for government intervention. They are:

- The Imperfectly-Competitive Markets within Distribution
- Foreign Film Distribution and Australian Film Export Opportunities
- Externities Arguments
- The Merits Goods and Information Market Failure Arguments
- The Weak Industry Argument
- Income Redistribution Arguments

Jones then attempts to refute these arguments. Taking one at random, the Externities Argument, Jones presents (on p. 42):

Supporters of film industry subsidization schemes claim that film acts as a public good, given its external benefits. But do Australians really think that local film and television industry generates no many external benefits that they are willing to pay for them?

Then comes the analysis. Jones begins badly with a couple of misuses of Australian words in Australian text and television successes overseas. His chief reason on is the notion of "dissemination of knowledge about Australia" which he will stimulate demand for a "national products and promote Australia as a tourist destination" (p. 43). He quotes K. Gokhale, in *Policies for the Australian Film Industry* Part A: *Assistance for Assistance and Direct Government Support* (AFTRA) argues that "Australian films may be a relatively cost efficient way of achieving such benefits."

Jones agrees of such a position.

This line of argumentation is logically extended to a wide variety of activities to justify a subsidy. For example, an Australian could go to the US and meet some one on his/her travel, as a result of which the Americans decide to visit Australia. Does this justify a government subsidy to the Australian planning to visit the US? (p. 42)

But by what criteria judge that one deserves a cultural credit shows to thousands or millions of people all the chief aim of tourists in

holiday? This is a rather a question as posited on the feedback cover of the book, merely an irrelevant and unsupportable ideology.

Next, too, Jones' favoured technique of quoting one opinion, then trying to destroy that opinion so as to underline all those who hold a similar position. He must have little regard for the intelligence of his readers.

But worse is to follow, when an argu-ment he adds

Further, all of Australian film and television programs will show Australians in a stereotypical, selfish or arrogant way (as applied to someone in an Australian film like *Mad Max 3* (sic), which shows Australia after the destruction of nuclear war, including self-reliance through rampant law-breaking in Australia).

Jones and The Centre for Independent Research need to kidding. This is near to ridiculous.

Oh, but why go on? Despite Pedro P. McGuinness' favourable opinion of this work in his "Preface", this book is a researched poorly written and weakly argued. Its publication is an embarrassment for all concerned.

NOTES

1. While the reviewer is unfamiliar with the international industry, only the film industry of the book was covered and here.

2. An obvious exception would be the French industry. This is an opinion based on a some years' finding over about one half of the French industry and past.

IMAGES OF AUSTRALIA: 100 FILMS OF THE NEW AUSTRALIAN CINEMA

Mal Raftery, *Journal of Australian Studies* Press, Dec. 1991, 320 pp. R\$ 49.95.

REVIEW BY P. R. A. N. S.

By now, it strikes me as odd to read at "the search of written material on the Australian cinema in general and the New Australian Cinema in particular", as Mal Raftery writes in the introductory section of *Images of Australia*. In fact, there is now a quite impressive shelf-full of books, let alone numerous articles on the Australian cinema of the past two decades, and there is not much that is actually new in Raftery's book, though the material is organized along somewhat different lines.

After a very brief historical overview which arrives at the surprising conclusion that the "New Australian Cinema remains in a very healthy state", Raftery sets out to provide a "critical survey" in which he places his discussion of Australian cinema. What he aims to do in "Part I: Contexts" is to address certain key elements of our national mythology and to suggest how these are articulated through recurring themes in Australian film. "Part II: Texts" then examines one hundred films, largely in the light of how they represent the images of Australia and Australianness (old days in Part I). For each film considered in Part I there is a short plot synopsis followed by a fairly two-page account of the film, suggesting which of the identified themes/texts/images it most clearly exhibits.



It thus sounds a slightly tedious procedure then that to an accurate reflection. There is nothing foolish in the book but the constant repetition of this or that theme (e.g. loss of innocence) as the focus from film to film is wearying. To be fair, no doubt Kattigan does it easily expect people to read it from beginning to end as a reviewer must, and dipping into it to check his views on particular film probably more what he has in mind. To be fair again, virtually no organisational method for dealing with a large number of film texts seems able to avoid either a certain amount of repetition or some strained categorising. The only books on the New Australian Cinema which have compiled these texts are collections of essays which do not add to the comprehensive nature of a survey.

The recurring elements which Kattigan identifies in traditional mythology and which he locates in motifs in New Australian Cinema include, unsurprisingly, the bush (the "one overriding motif that defines and orientates all attempts to create and maintain a perception of what Australia is") and the "legend of the bush man." Associated with these are the legend of the pioneer which, unlike that of the bushman, "provides a place for women in its mythology" and the Antipodean legend in discussing the latter he makes the point that the historical track of Ballpall "provided an opportunity to bring the ordinary Australian into the dominant cultural perceptions." Rural, Wild and, drawing on Wild, Jane Talbot have already discussed how the bush legend was crucially reformed by the perception of the Australian as war. Kattigan goes on to discuss the "bush", in his "rejection of many dominant or middle-class values" as a natural descendant of the bush – and Anglo-Irish images of the Australian male, and the image of Australia, an actually every one has noted, are essentially male.

Most of this introductory material is unobjectionable. Kattigan's account of the Australian mythology of Anglo-Irish culture affects no car-

ping, and could have helped him to negotiate more carefully the sometimes contrary influences of Britain and America on the legends which Australian culture has taken (but as a general, summarising essay). Part I deals as an introduction to understanding of the film. He at least makes clear why he has structured the book in this way and he also spells out his criteria for choosing the hundred films (e.g. "a feature film is a narrative fiction over eighty minutes in length, no animated or documentary films, etc.). One doesn't have to agree with his criteria or regard his structure as the best possible, but he at least makes up for the nature of the enquiries.

Again, in dealing with the concept of the film, he draws attention to the themes of the bush, of childhood, of growing up and of the loss of innocence. My impression is that the book is at its most perceptive in its understanding of the way the bush has worked as a formation influence on the narrative psyche – tracing this through such diverse films as *Passions of Hopping Mad*, *Blackbacked Evil Angels*. His characterising the bush as a place of hidden terror is well substantiated in the discussion of those films, though in several instances (e.g. *His Secret Life*) his account of *Wetbacked* by legend (the ideological about landscape as "character in the narrative") landscape is surely positive, if in a film it assumes a threatening aspect, this will be largely a function of what is going on (of course, angle and so on). Kattigan's praise for the non-realism of *Blackbacked* is a point of view of the bush suggests that he is short in such matters.

If the stress on the "growing-up-in-Australia" films (generally warlike) – and it does – this because a quite and ordinary number of films have organised their narratives around this phenomenon. It seems to me while repeating Kattigan's right to structure his material as he does, that the somewhat rendering of such a theme would be more usefully carried under a thematic heading, rather than making a point through sheer repetition. This way – and would perhaps be led to make comparisons not directly between the films exhibiting such preoccupations, but between them and the culture they derive from and in some ways reflect.

There are incidental fallacies of interpretation and criticism scattered throughout the book. For example, on *Mad Dog Morgan* he writes of depiction of the bush as a "cultural intermediary between convict and settler" or on *Mad Max* is a "anti-urbanisation myth" of "less than any New Australian cultural specificity", or on *Kitty and the Magician* as a film which "reveals the character with historical victory that plays upon past productions of the New Australian Cinema." And so on. In general, though, the book would have been wiser to avoid evaluation once it has the space to do more than offer little summarising opinions ("One impressionistic summarising..."). It must be added that Petersen is not a good film. Kattigan is not especially concerned to develop such evaluative criteria for which, of course, there is a place. His chief interest is in the kinds of national image that emerge from

his reading of a wide range of films, and his book supports his contention about those myths and legends that underpin the national culture.

QUEENSLAND IMAGES IN FILM AND TELEVISION

Edited by Jonathan Dawson and Bruce Malloy.
University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia, Qld.,
1990. 300 pp. pb, mp \$64.95.

Ron Raftery

In looking at the images and mythologies which film and television have constructed about Queensland, the University of Queensland associate professor Jonathan Dawson found:

constant reference to Queensland [...] as being somewhere other somewhere strange, sub-tropical, somewhere else. Often, it is the *Queensland Paradise* as seen to foreigners, the equivalent of the Deep South in America, with much attention being a change, while shared white-bellied pictures of job or stress. (*The Australian* 10 June 1989)

Many of these films were shown as part of a "festival" festival, entitled Queensland Images, which were screened in three-week periods of three venues in Brisbane in June last year. This major retrospective of Queensland film and television included mainstream and low-budget features, documentaries, short stories, advertisements, animated and experimental work, and historical footage from the National Film & Sound Archive and private collections – more than 100 titles in all.

While organisers were disappointed with attendance figures to some extent, their feeling was that, overall, the event succeeded in terms of the attention it generated and in helping to "restate in history a whole lot of forgotten people" and their work. Also, in classic film festival, the Queensland Images festival opened a publication at the same time, launched to coincide with the festival opening.

As Dawson and co-editor Queensland University of Technology academic Bruce Malloy, note, while the Queensland film industry has traditionally been monopolised by the southern states, it is something of an irony that Queensland possesses a "surprisingly strong, and only lately film culture" located in only a small section in the universities and colleges. All is fine for students of film and media, they suggest, "for as long as that is, as they mean students" it is the history sector also which most likely found the publication useful. Unlike Dick Marks' television-on-commercial films, no glossy images, desired for other state endorsement. It does however have contributions from most of the prominent film scholars in (or from) Queensland, including Stephen Crofts, Stuart Cunningham, Tom G'Heegan, Albert Isaacs, Tony Miller, as well as Dawson and Malloy.

The book is divided into two sections "Filming Queensland" and "Projecting Queensland." The first part, much of it analytical, consists of interviews with or recollections by pioneer cinematographer George Byrne (of

Klausener (Pines), *Intimations*, *Flowing*, *Stargazing*, *George Wilson-Coppage* and *Max Merritt* (from whose film *Robert and David* the book's cover illustration has been chosen): successful or minor. Chris Marks, former ABC educational film producer David Penhale, and the state's highest profile filmmaker Jackie McKenzie. The "Filming Queensland" section also features a warm tribute to Mervyn Morris, who established the state's Educational Media Centre, written by former staffer David Marshall. Documentary filmmaking is appropriately accorded prime coverage as a role (but McPherson's account suggests that the Queensland Media Services Centre, at least, has been a positive force over a number of years).

The book's second, and longer, section "Projecting Queensland" contains three descriptive pieces. Helen Hunter's satirical account of the rise and fall of the Queensland Film Commission (which returns in a way Jackie McKenzie's very script in *Fast One*); Pat Laughman and Susan Ward's breathless coverage of independent filmmaking in Queensland since the early 1990s; and Allen Young's equally rapid fire appraisal of the fluctuating fortunes of the state's film societies. These essays are interspersed with critiques of individual productions and their cultural resonances. Tim O'Regan in *Revelled*, Stephen Griffith in *The Cowgirls Got It*, Toby Miller in the full new *Mission Impossible*, Albert Moran on *Gene Travata*, *An Uncommon History*, Stuart Cunningham on *Sons of Matthew*, Jonathan Dawson on the large of *Idolhead*, and repeated beer commercials.

There is much to value in these case studies. By exploring in greater context the key most prominent features made with QFC assistance, O'Regan and Griffith argue effectively for a more nuanced appraisal of both. Miller highlights the heterogeneity of a state distinguished often as "regional" because of its distinctive climate, in turn celebrating "topographic hetero-

hoods" in the region's topographic production families: landscapes and internationalists (the "new Queensland"). Moran's examination of the phenomenon of unlikely success of Mark Lewis Case, *Twelve*, also considers the question of voice over in recent documentary practice. Cunningham, pointing to his own detailed review of Charles Chazelle's work in *Ponding Australia*, sees *Sons of Matthew* as unquestionably the "great Queensland film" Dawson finds, surprisingly, that "in striving for the private filmmaker best results in Queensland limited to have-shaded-out international cinéphilie".

The first essay in the "Projecting Queensland" section, written by co-editor Bruce Malloy, also looks at dominant images of Queensland, then includes this set in, then in it relating to the state. Queensland, he concludes, has with few exceptions been variously constructed or represented as "mythic destination, exotic playground, tropical landscape, even that restful place". Much of this definition comes from outside the state, but these popular perceptions are unlikely to change. Malloy insists, unlike regional feature film industry is operational.

Malloy is surprised by the number of Australian feature films which make reference to Queensland, and promises a checklist of forty titles in the category at the end of his article. Some of his examples – *John White Death*, *20A*, *Typecast*, *Centuria*, *Seven Days of Sorrow* – are equally surprising, given that these films were included for screening at the Queensland Image Festival. In fact, the equations of the festival. Malloy included apparently identified more than 200 movies and video images devoted to Queensland in their search for suitable screening material in some ways. Their efforts to catalogue the "evolving history of Queensland film and television" appear as more comprehensive than the accompanying text.

The book, for example, makes no reference to the work of Fred Hill, Queensland's official photographer, who filmed the twilight of the coastal era with a Lyman camera alongside the film produced for the Greater Britain Centennial in 1999, represent possibly the oldest photographic record of production in the world. Similarly, apart from a few reminiscences by George Burns, no real coverage of national production, distribution or reception in Queensland is provided, as of the vast array of government sponsored documentaries made in or about Queensland – Mark Lewis' and the McQuinn's work excepted. Treatment of "indigenous media" is confined to a few paragraphs in the Malloy and Laughman Ward as maps. And there is no index to guide the reader to specific films, personalities or subjects.

Despite the book's title, the reader is also unlikely to gain much impression of history on in Queensland past or present. There is simply no place in *Queensland Images* to compare with the John Huxley Tom O'Regan or Eric Miller's essays in *Western Australia's* equivalent text, *The Moving Image* (1985). In realising that publication at the time, I noted that it was the most comprehensive work written in quality but significant as the last attempt in Australia to map a regional film and television culture. In so doing, it staked a claim for legitimising regional

film and television history as a suitable territory for researchers. Queensland Images may help substantiate this claim.

In relation to *The Moving Image*, I also recall being struck not so much by the particularity of the Western Australian film and television experience or by the problems suffered as a result of its geographical situation, but by the parallels with several cultural experiences throughout Australia. Does the same hold for Queensland Images? Patrick Cook in *Down Track* sees Queenslanders' dislike of *Phenomenal* and *Lighter-Hearted* as evidence of their peripheral status, but Albert Moran argues that such misapprehensions can be multiplied infinitely.

At different times, it reminds of New South Wales and Victoria: the frontier is not just in Australia but in surfing regions – Tasmania, Western Australia, the Northern Territory and Queensland. But *Idolhead* seems to have especially sometimes said that they are on the outer compared to other causes in Sydney. In Sydney (again) the [Sydney] Evening Herald journalist (Mark) Johnson and Cook preach in *State and Nation* featuring every Sydney-based film made in frontier territory in Brisbane Game. *Idolhead* is at least an attempt and sometimes an achievement that the periphery is in North Queensland. After all that is where the state had come from. In short, this pattern, classical consciousness thinking is everywhere. — (p. 188-189)

In the "Foreword" to *Queensland Images*, Peter Goodridge, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) at Queensland University of Technology (QUT) is another way.

Queensland may in my naïve eyes at least, rather than, even significantly different as compared with other parts of Australia. The reality is, however, that many people think it is different, and probably just as many want to believe that it is.

But emphasizing isolation by establishing an "us/their" opposition has its limitations as well. Toby Miller, for example, draws attention to Albert Merritt's is a landmark text. "The demarcation of an evil other is never exempt from a certain Italian-Renaissance attitude to be found at the heart of the notion of cultural identity" which, the argument continues, can lead to an "empty, empty landscape", especially where such localism amounts to little more than tender narrative styles.

Perhaps the Queensland "predicament" is best expressed in the book's page code, by the former Executive Officer of the Queensland Film Development Office, Michael McPherson. The QFDO provided financial support for both the Queensland Images Festival and publication, and McPherson expresses the hope that the QFDO will continue to play an active role in the development of a Queensland film industry. The possibilities, after all, are "not waiting – the weather, the locations, the studios, and the people". And his parting statement? "Well, it's out of my hands now – I've moved to a cooler climate" (McPherson).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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A PANEL OF TEN FILM REVIEWERS HAS RATED A SELECTION OF THE LATEST RELEASES ON A SCALE OF 0 TO 10, THE LATTER BEING THE OPTIMUM RATING (A DASH MEANS NOT RATED). THE CRITICS ARE: BILL COLLINS (CHANNEL 10); THE DAILY MIRROR (SYDNEY); SANDRA HILL (THE BULLETIN, SYDNEY); PAUL HARRIS (SMH); EG, THE AGE, MELBOURNE; PAUL HUTCHINGS (SEVEN NETWORK, NEWS@SUN, MELBOURNE); STAN JAMES (THE AGE/LAKE ADVERTISER); NEIL JULETT (THE AGE); ADRIAN MARTIN (BUSINESS REVIEW WEEKLY, SYDNEY, "SCREENS" 3RN); TOM SPAN (3LO, THE BRIGHT AGE, MELBOURNE); DAVID STRATHEN (COUNTRY 95.9, SYDNEY); AND RYAN WILLIAMS (THE AUSTRALIAN, SYDNEY).

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ASA Andrew Haas	—	5	4	5	—	4	5	4	5	4.5
THE COMFORT OF STRANGERS Paul Schrader	—	5	4	5	—	5	7	5	7	7.5
THE COMMITMENTS Alan Parker	5	5	7	5	7	5	5	5	7	7.2
DOO HOLLYWOOD Michael Caine/Joan	5	—	2	4	2	5	—	5	—	3.5
DRIVING ME CRAZY (DASH) Peter Faiman	—	—	2	5	—	1	1	—	—	1.4
THE FINGER BANG Terry Gilliam	5	7	4	7	5	—	7	—	7	5.9
LE NAIN DE CYPRE (The Nubian's Nubian) Patrick Lecontey	5	5	5	—	—	4	—	5	—	5.5
HOLIDAYS ON THE RIVER PARVA Len Cechovsky	—	5	5	—	—	4	5	5	5	5.7
HUNTING Frank Houston	1	—	2	1	—	1	—	5	—	2
IMPRESSIONI Dineo Kuyt	—	7	3	3	—	7	—	7	3	4.5
JU OOI Chung Si-Ming	5	7	5	5	—	5	—	5	5	5
JUNGLE FEVER Spike Lee	5	5	5	7	5	5	3	4	5	5.5
LIFE IS SWEET Mike Leigh	4	7	5	7	—	7	7	4	7	6.4
LIPSY IN AMERICA Harry Alexander Brown	—	4	5	5	—	5	—	4	5	4.5
MISTER JOHNSON Bruce Beresford	—	4	—	7	5	—	—	5	5	5.2
MORTAL THOUGHTS Alan Rudolph	7	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	—	5
MORI LA VIE Bernard Blot	—	—	1	5	—	—	2	2	5	3.5
NEW JACK CITY Mario Van Peebles	5	—	4	5	—	7	2	3	5	4.5
PROSPERO'S BOOKS Peter Greenaway	5D	7	2	3	—	4	—	—	—	5
REBECCA'S HENRY Mike Nichols	5	5	1	3	7	3	5	1	5	3.4
THE ROOKIE Clint Eastwood	7	—	2	—	3	3	—	—	5	3.5
SOAPFISH Michael Hoffman	7	5	1	5	5	3	2	5	7	5.1
SWITCH Blake Edwards	—	3	4	5	3	3	5	4	3	4
THURST Hal Hartley	—	2	5	—	—	5	—	5	7	7.5
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